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ABSTRACT

The 16 articles in this journal issue identify and assess change and constants in intercollegiate forensics during the decade of the 1970s. The articles give varying perspectives on the significance of the decade and the topics range from concern for tenure for the debate coach to the formats of argumentation theory within the debates themselves. (FL)

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FORENSICS IN THE SEVENTIES: A RETROSPECTIVE

This special issue of *Speaker and Gavel* is devoted to a backward-glance over the decade just ending in the hopes of identifying and assessing change and constants in intercollegiate forensics.

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IN RETROSPECT: FORENSICS IN THE SEVENTIES

JAMES A. BENSON

Recollecting the changes which characterized forensics during the decade of the seventies elicits both nostalgic sentiments and feelings of pride at being involved in such a dynamic activity.

The changes were many and, especially in the early and middle seventies, there was an abundance of healthy innovation. Debate, for example, witnessed healthy experimentation with new types of case structures, reflecting sophisticated patterns of analysis to justify adoption of the resolution. Controversy regarding some of the cases and concepts (alternative justification, conditional counterplan and attitudinal inherency were three of the most controversial) generated healthy intellectual debates about the merits and legitimacy of such proposals. The result was an enriching of the literature relating to argumentation and debate.

Endorsement of the cross-examination debate format resurrected an almost-forgotten debate option and reintroduced intercollegiate advocates to the art of asking questions as a form of analysis and refutation in a debate.

The emergence of off-topic debating by Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha and, later, by the Cross Examination Debate Association, provided an alternative for the student whose preference was for questions of value and increased emphasis upon communicative style.

National tournaments for junior varsity and novice debaters provided extra incentive for the less-seasoned members of many squads.

The 1970s was an exhilarating decade for those involved in individual events as well. A fledgling activity entered the decade rather timorously. Many departments of speech communication had never heard of the activity. By the end of the decade, however, individual events would be the most popular of forensic events, involving the majority of students who participate in forensics on any given weekend.

Two national individual events tournaments have come to fruition during the decade, reflecting different concepts of how a student qualifies for nationals and providing a healthy means for directors of individual events programs to influence the national tournament via a decision of which to attend. With one hundred or more universities attending each national, both the National Forensic Association tournament and the American Forensic Association tournament appear healthy and vital at the end of the decade.

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The proliferation of individual events participants generated hundreds of new tournaments throughout the nation, expansion of existing individual events tournaments (such as that of DSR-TKA) and spawned the addition of new events at nationals—after-dinner speaking, rhetorical criticism, informative speaking, impromptu and dramatic interpretation.

By the end of the decade, healthy criticism of individual events was prompting occasional articles which attempted to define or theorize about some of the individual events and had begun to stimulate thoughts of empirical research into the activity.

The granting of program status at the Speech Communication Association convention was important recognition for individual events as the decade drew to a close.

Not all changes were for the better in the 1970s, however. Significant causes for concern emerged and, to date, have been ineffectively confronted. These concerns will constitute the remainder of this purview by one who was directing a program involving both debate and individual events during the decade.

I hope I can avoid sounding like a doomsday prophet or an antidebate commentator as I discuss what I perceive to be the challenges facing debate at the end of the decade. I, personally, feel that debate can be one of the most valuable vehicles to teach analysis and research, to develop quick, effective defense and refutation of ideas, and, yes, to facilitate effective delivery techniques for an advocate.

It is apparent that debate has experienced a significant decline in popularity. Not only have numerous debate programs and tournaments folded, but the typical tournament—with few exceptions—draws only a fraction of the schools once attending. While the causes are many and varied, a sad fact is that the debate community, in its "response" to the problem, is guilty of sophistic name-calling, rather than attempting to come to grips with the causes of the problem. Frankly, there is no dialogue between the divergent views of debate—only pseudo-dialogue.

In response to the complaint that debate is no longer focusing upon communication skills, the reply is that debate is an "elitist game of information processing, not communication training." (How in the world does one "process" something if it isn't *communicated* clearly—or if it is communicated in a truncated form which only a few can—or at least claim to—understand?) But to tell someone who can't understand that they should leave the activity is, ultimately, self-defeating. It leads to restricting the impact of the activity to only a few. And in a day when departments of speech communication (who still sponsor most of our programs) are beginning to "bite the bullet" on budgets, this makes debate an easy target for financial cuts.

To refuse a dialogue on the issues—delivery, unorthodox cases, whatever—by opting for "other forms of debate for those who object" is not only to avoid the issue but to divide the debate community at a time when it desperately needs a united front.

Debate should not be thought of as an elitist activity. It should not because that type of thinking makes the "elitist" unduly confident of the soundness of his/her practices as a debater or coach. Those who disagree with the elitist are automatically discredited as unknowledgeable; recommended changes are perceived as more divergent from current practices than they actually are (what Sherif, Sherif and Nebergall would call the Latitude of Rejection in action)! I'm suggesting, then, that debate should not be afraid to *debate itself*.

Thinking of debate as an "elitist" activity also fosters the acceptance of practices which would not be tolerated in a non-game environment. This is to say that it is *not* unreasonable to want to know complete sourcing for one's evidence; it is not unrealistic to expect that the evidence, as read in the debate (rather than from cards after the round) be self-evident and clear; and one is not unjustified to expect that a parameter, voted upon before the season begins, ought to define the resolution. To reply that there must be something wrong with those who feel this way is to evade the issue.

A complaint of many is the method by which the debate resolution is selected. Too frequently, the same or similar topics are given as choices on successive years. Unlike the early 1970s, a list of preliminary choices, from which the final four choices are selected, has been discontinued. Often, the choices for discussion topics do not even meet the criteria of a well-worded discussion question. Perhaps a broader range of initial choices for debate topics, coupled with a more democratic method of determining the final options, and better wording of discussion topics would encourage more to participate in the activities.

Dialogue within the debate community, debate *about* debate, attempts to unify those in the activity—these are the issues which I see confronting debate at the end of the seventies.

Individual events, too, has issues to confront. Some of these issues relate to rapid growing pains; others stem from neglected problems.

Because it has grown rapidly, individual events suffers from a lack of coordination. There are too many tournaments in some geographical regions on some weekends and large gaps in the tournament calendar in other areas. Some means of coordinating the calendar and of eliminating duplicative efforts is necessary. Regional coordinating boards might provide the answer.

Individual events also anguishes from a proliferation of speaking events which are not clearly defined. Rules for the event tend to substitute for careful definitions of events, resulting in considerable confusion about events and some legitimate questions about the validity of some events. Impromptu, after-dinner speaking and rhetorical criticism are three examples of events in need of definition. Theoretical essays which attempt to define the purpose and intended goals of these events—as well as criteria for judging the events—are needed.

A trend toward "creative" events, such as demagogic speaking (where the student takes a stand on an untenable position) poses a threat to the welfare of the activity, in my opinion. "Creative" though such events may be, why should we be training students to take untenable stands; why should we be trying to decide who did the best job of being illogical?

Judge qualification is a third concern which I feel individual events must address. The typical tournament assumes that all judges are qualified to judge all events—and that's simply not true. The judge who "clears" to judge extemp (often because he/she doesn't have any students entered in the event) does not qualify to judge the event unless he/she possesses knowledge of current events and understands the criteria by which to judge the event. Adoption of an entry form which allows judges to indicate their strong events and those which they should not judge are being used by a few tournaments and need to be utilized by more.

Finally, empirical research which addresses problems like judging criteria, judge qualification, the extent to which the activity achieves the purported goals is an overdue scholarly focus for individual events.

I, personally, enjoyed being a part of forensics in the decade of the seventies. It was primarily an exciting—though sometimes a frustrating—time to be a part of the forensics scene. On balance, forensics prospered and, with attention to the issues and problems I perceive, forensics can continue to prosper in the decade to come.

THE ASCENT OF POLICY-MAKING: ACADEMIC DEBATE FROM 1970 TO 1980

ROBERT J. BRANHAM AND THOMAS ISAACSON

Competitive debate is perhaps the only game which permits (and even encourages) the rewriting of its fundamental assumptions, objectives, rules, and procedures by the players. The most influential factor in the development of debate during the 1970s was the emergence of an alternative paradigm for evaluation: the analogy between decision-making in debate and the legislative consideration of competing policy systems. Reaching far beyond its adherents, the policy-making model of debate has profoundly altered the judging process, the weights accorded various traditional debate issues, and the types and forms of arguments presented.

The 1960s witnessed a spreading dissatisfaction with the assumptions and mores of traditional "stock issues" judging: the establishment of fixed thresholds of acceptable proof by the affirmative for each of several predetermined issues. Proponents of the comparative advantage case format suggested that one might reasonably endorse an affirmative plan able to secure net benefits which exceed, however slightly, those of the *status quo*. The debate over acceptability of the comparative advantage design during the 1960s initiated a (still incomplete) paradigmatic revolution. It exposed problems of the previously accepted order while at first offering no coherent replacement for the model of debate practice and evaluation presented by the "reasonable man" of the stock issues perspective. The policy systems model evolved from this controversy to provide one clear context in which the comparative advantage case could be understood and assessed. It offered the clarity of a sustained metaphor, a close analogy to the agent of action in debate topics, and the application of a refined decision-making process broad and flexible enough to accommodate debate issues ranging from argument weights to competitive fairness.

It would be highly inaccurate to suggest that by the end of the 1970s all debaters and judges had come to embrace the policy systems paradigm. Numerous competing models of the debate process exist and hold strong pockets of support. Furthermore, there is substantial movement by the judging community towards aparadigmatic or *tabula rasa* philosophies of evaluation, which place the burden for articulation and defense of judging models upon the debaters themselves.[1] Even those who personally hold judging perspective preferences frequently announce their willingness to accept alternative models successfully defended within debates.

Our contention is simply that no other judging paradigm of the 1970s produced more widespread practical consequences than the policy systems model and that the new argumentative strategies and tactics which appeared during the past decade may be best understood through reference to this common frame. We shall trace the influence of the policy-

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[1] *1980 National Debate Tournament Judging Philosophy Booklet*, ed. Janet S. Trapp (Greeley, Colorado: University of Northern Colorado, 1980).

making approach on four categories of argumentative texts and issues: case issues; counterplans; plan texts; and plan attacks.

Case Issues

The hallmark of the stock issues judging model is its isolation of certain argumentative burdens for which thresholds of sufficient proof must be established by affirmative advocates. The affirmative, according to this model, is required to demonstrate that its case meets the independent thresholds of significance and inherency and that its plan fulfills given minimal expectations of feasibility and freedom from significant disadvantages.

The influence of the policy-making paradigm has reduced the independent importance of the stock issues. Instead of focusing upon the attributes of the affirmative case and plan alone, teams have come to contrast the affirmative policy with one or more competing and detailed alternatives. Thresholds of acceptable affirmative proof have been largely replaced with the comparative attributes of two (or more) competing policy options. The net costs and benefits of the affirmative plan are computed by reference to the system articulated and defended by the negative, recontextualizing the traditional stock issues as follows.[2]

The growing influence of the policy-making perspective during the 1970s altered common expectations regarding traditional stock issues in two ways: it reduced the independent status of the stock issues as voting bases and demanded consistent defense of a policy alternative by the negative. These twin expectations dramatically changed the nature of first negative argumentation in the past decade, limiting its influence (in conventional forms) on the decision, heightening the demands for coherence and refutation through *advocacy*, and requiring the comparative application of plan attacks to the negative system as well as that of the affirmative.

The effects of these altered expectations are particularly noticeable in the case of inherency argumentation. Inherency became regarded less as a demonstration of causation for problems than a predictive dimension of systemic capability appropriate for policy contrast. First affirmative inherency statements increasingly testified to the inexplicability and bureaucratic inevitability of problem continuation within complex control systems. Existential and "fragmentation" inherencies reached new levels of prominence. Three common forms of inherency defense by the end of the 1970s were the "turnaround," the "should not" inherency, and the claim of non-competitiveness. Each emphasizes systemic contrast of remedial programs rather than focusing on the causal properties of a problem. Each attempts to make inherency issues easier to compute as relative (and even additional) significance. The turnaround, in its simplest form, argues that disadvantages offered by the negative to the affirmative plan are obtained to a greater degree under the policies defended by the negative. Other forms of the turnaround, such as the attempt to argue that the condition produced in a negative disadvantage is in fact a desirable outcome, leapfrog the conventional inherency requirement by accepting the negative's

[2] In a counterplan debate, counterplan significance would be added to the ideal negative advantage while disadvantages to the counterplan would be added to the ideal affirmative advantage.

[3] Further discussion may be found in Walter Ulrich, "A Theory of the Turnaround," *Speaker and Gavel*, 16 (Summer 1979), pp. 73–76.

Ideal Affirmative Advantage (highest claimed case significance + turnarounds)

minus problem overstatement
(via negative significance indictments)

minus non-unique advantage
(via negative inherency indictments)

minus unobtainable advantage
(via negative plan-meet-advantage indictments)

minus non-germane advantage
(via negative extratopicality indictments)

= Actual Affirmative Advantage (Gross)

PRESUMPTION

Ideal Negative Advantage (highest claimed disadvantage significance avoided)

minus problem overstatement
(via affirmative indictments of disadvantage significance)

minus non-unique advantage
(via affirmative demonstration that disadvantage is obtained to some degree under the negative policy)

minus unentailed significance
(via affirmative denial of plan/disadvantage link)

minus non-germane advantage
(via affirmative demonstration of probable policy modification or non-intrinsic relationship between plan or resolution and disadvantage)

= Actual Negative Advantage (Gross)

position that the condition is inherently obtained to a greater degree under the affirmative plan than with the negative policy. The "should not" inherency, a term coined long ago by Herbert James of Dartmouth College, is a defense which argues that programs advocated by the negative are disadvantageous (creating new and comparative advantages for the affirmative plan) rather than structurally or practically infeasible. The claim of non-competitiveness by the affirmative in inherency defense demands a demonstration by the negative that programs advocated are inconsistent with and precluded by the adoption of the affirmative plan. In this last form of argumentation, the growing conceptual association between the counterplan (the historical embodiment of competing policy systems) and

inherency arguments promoted by the ascent of the policy-making model is evident.

Counterplans

The rise in popularity of counterplan advocacy among debaters and judges during the 1970s was meteoric. This trend was certainly promoted, if not wholly produced, by the increasing influence of the policy-making paradigm. The counterplan responds in an obvious fashion to the demands of coherence and systemic advocacy placed upon negative teams. Further, the ascendence of the counterplan paralleled the declining weight of traditional first negative argumentation approaches, affording a potent form for expressing the tangible benefits of systemic options precluded by plan adoption.[4] In an important sense, the counterplan functions like a disadvantage, demonstrating benefits of precluded alternatives to be weighed against plan advantages. Such a view is consistent with the treatment under the policy-making model of disadvantages as *advantages* of the negative policy system (and vice versa) rather than as independent stock issue liabilities. The ascendence of the counterplan as an argumentative strategy has been coincidental with the rising importance of the disadvantage in the policy-making model.

The 1970s also witnessed the first widespread use and acceptance of generic counterplans designed to offer competitive alternatives for a number of plan approaches. These generic approaches have concentrated upon the checklist of policy alternatives traditionally considered by federal legislators prior to the approval of legislation. The state-level counterplan reflects the long-standing concern of actual legislators regarding federal encroachment upon states' rights and appropriate fields of action (replacing the "justification" argument of the stock issues era). The voluntary or private agency counterplan reflects the fundamental concern among real policy-makers in the age of deregulation for the appropriateness and suitability of federal action in fields long dominated by private markets and institutions. The studies counterplan properly reflects the increasing reluctance of real policy-makers to commit themselves to a program of action before a competing program of systematic and preliminary research has been completed. The public participation counterplan mirrors the increasing hesitation of federal policy-makers to adopt regulatory mandates without previous public information, hearings, and recommendations.

The growth of the counterplan in the 1970s may thus be largely attributed to the demands of the policy systems paradigm for consistency, negative advocacy, disadvantage emphasis, and relevance to the concerns and alternatives of actual legislators.

The Plan and Plan Attacks

During the decade of the seventies plan texts lengthened, specific plan planks rose and fell in importance and popularity, and the weights and responsibilities for advocacy represented by the plan underwent substantial transformation.

During the first half of the decade, plans were forced to manifest a strong

[4] Unlike traditional inherency arguments, the counterplan also enjoys fiated adoption, thus enhancing its comparative strategic desirability. I have argued elsewhere that this windfall may be unwarranted. See Robert J. Branham, "The Counterplan as Disadvantage," *Speaker and Gavel*, 16 (Summer 1979), pp. 61–66.

first line of defense against disadvantages. Three developments contributed to the enhanced role of the disadvantage under the policy-making paradigm: the virtual requirement of a disadvantage to counterbalance even the most marginal of affirmative advantages (as illustrated in the stock issues diagram above); the growing prevalence of generic second negative approaches; and the increased use and respectability of disadvantages based upon the processes employed by the plan. Each of these developments may be attributed to the ascent of the policy-making model and each induced major alterations in the nature and structure of plans.

The transformation in the decision weight of the disadvantage during the 1970s is perhaps best demonstrated through the contrast of two judging philosophy statements from the 1980 National Debate Tournament. A traditional stock issues judge who began coaching twenty-four years ago wrote: "More and more I find myself expecting the affirmative to carry a significant advantage or advantages which is *free from significant disadvantages.*"[5] A different weight is suggested by a quintessential policy-maker who debated during the seventies: "Debate is . . . a test of the relative desirability of the affirmative plan compared to the negative's competing alternative."[6] Given the increasing acceptance of the latter view during the past decade, disadvantages have become the critical element in the comparative balance of systemic advantages required for a negative decision. At the same time, disadvantages posed by the negative came to be considered as comparative advantages of their policy alternative, requiring a level of structure and proof similar to that demanded of the affirmative.

Disadvantages lengthened and coalesced into generic positions applying to numerous plans. The effects of policy adoption upon business confidence, loss of competing social priorities for limited funding resources, and economic growth, to name but a few, became common arrows in the second negative quiver. The new popularity of generic disadvantages encouraged affirmative anticipation and an initial defense embodied in the affirmative plan. Two principal forms of plan defense were prompted by the growth of generic plan attacks: the "spike" and the turnaround. Spikes originally attempted to modify the plan to forestall plan objections. Spikes might anticipate social spending arguments, for example, by providing multiple funding sources, off-budget status, or prohibitions of cuts in particular areas. During the 1970s, spikes also became an important first line of defense against generic counterplans, providing for state-level implementation or funding, on-going study, and even for plan reconsideration and possible repeal. The ascent of the turnaround, an argument which suggests that conditions raised in plan objections will be better avoided through plan adoption or that these conditions are in fact advantageous, was dependent upon the leap of thought promoted by the policy systems approach—a view of the negative as systemic advocates.

Specific plan provisions provide an insightful record of the development of plan attacks and defenses. Like tree rings, their presence records the rising incidence of particular genres of attacks, common defensive strategies issued in reaction against them, and a sense of the seasonal transitions inevitable in the course of these attacks, defenses, and the nature and purpose of the plan text.

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[5] Statement of James A. Johnson, *1980 NDT Judging Philosophy Booklet*, p. 33.
[6] Statement of John D. Graham, *Ibid.*, p. 22.

The common plan of the early 1970s, fresh with the bloom of the policy-making paradigm, attempted to squelch the still-potent plan-meet-advantage arguments of the stock issues era through the development of an administrative oversight and implementation agency with powers and independence unprecedented in political history. These "magic boards," as they were soon dubbed, were appointed by the affirmative team, self-perpetuating, imbued with an unwavering philosophy, endowed with inconceivable enforcement powers, and freed from the troublesome power checks placed upon real bureaucratic institutions.

Eventually, these aggressive but unrealistic plan provisions themselves became the subjects of generic plan objections. Plans were challenged for the tyrannous implications of independent and substantial power, for the broader precedents set by implementation provisions, for the use of independent special prosecutors to enforce plan mandates, and, as the decade began to wane, for the Constitutional violations and amendments required for such planks as affirmative appointment, guaranteed funding, and harsh enforcement which had characterized the plan of the early 1970s.

By the close of the decade, plan texts began to alter in response to these arguments regarding institutional process, representing the attempt to conform more closely to the structure and limitations of real legislation. Ironically, the rise and fall of the magic board seems to have strengthened the position of the policy-making paradigm, providing firm evidence of the self-regulating features of the model. The 1980s should provide the first real test for the desirability of this conformity to actual policy processes both as a general paradigmatic attribute and as the principal contemporary claim of the policy systems model.

Conclusion

The most significant contribution of the paradigmatic revolution of the 1970s was its promotion of skepticism, open-mindedness, and open discussion regarding the basic aims and means of debate. We have attempted to provide a brief history of the ideas and arguments prevalent in competitive debate during the 1970s. The ascent of the policy-making paradigm during this period seems to have provided the conceptual leap—the consideration of debate as a comparison of competing policy designs—which encouraged these developments. This is not to say that other models of debate might not also embrace these approaches. It is also not to suggest that all of these developments are desirable educational phenomena, nor is it intended to infer that the principal advocates of the policy-making model have endorsed these applications of their thoughts. It is, we believe, only possible to address the desirability of such specific argumentative approaches once an understanding of their intellectual history and interconnections has been established.

THE FORENSICS BRAIN-DRAIN

SIDNEY R. HILL

Trends, in the affairs of men, are there if you see them. The linking together of apparently unconnected data to trace the ebb and flow of any discipline is at best a speculative effort. As the value of such speculation is directly tied to the source from which it springs, it would seem both fair and wise to begin by alerting the reader to those biases from which the author operates. The following data are offered for that purpose (with apologies to the traditionalists for shifting into the first person).

(1) I debated both in high school and college. I was never especially successful, although there were very good debaters on the teams during my career. It would probably be most accurate to describe me as a good regional-level debater.
(2) I coached debate for some fifteen years, at four different institutions. My teams have usually been respectable, but seldom have achieved NDT-level success.
(3) I define myself professionally not as a coach, but as a teacher/ researcher. Although I love debate, and voluntarily returned to coaching after graduate school, debate is not my first priority. If forced to choose between coaching debate and continuing my research/writing/teaching activities in communication theory, I would quickly—if sadly—say goodby to debate.

In responding to the theme of this issue, one must choose between a panoramic view or a more narrow focus. With faith that the other contributors will cover developments ignored here, this paper will raise only one question: Where are all the coaches going?

Several years ago a most unusual tournament was held—unusual for this author, that is. If the name and date were given, those of you who were there probably wouldn't recall that anything out of the ordinary occurred. There were debate teams around, and plenty of catalogue cases piled up in the halls. Rounds were held, and trophies given away. The strange thing was that there didn't seem to be any coaches around. Oh, there were a lot of young graduate students huddling in corners with their teams doing last minute case analysis. But they all seemed to be new faces. Before you dismiss this as the maundering of an old man out of touch with the times, it should be noted that the author was then in his early thirties. In most professions, that is not thought to be especially old. Evidently in debate it is.

In the five years since this observation was first made, the trend has continued. Some of the old stalwarts remain, to be sure, but they are few and they stand out all the more every year among the younger faces which flood the tournaments. For the skeptics, a review of NDT booklets is suggested. The roster of schools doesn't change all that much from year to year, but the coaches do. All available data seem to lead to the same conclusion, forensics as a profession is not very successful in retaining its personnel.

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The importance of coaching personnel ought not to be ignored. In debate, as in any other discipline, experience may be presumed to add to competence. Increased exposure to the activity will generally lead to a better understanding of our purposes and goals, and also provide for the practitioner experiences which make him or her more effective in the training of students. Second, experienced coaches are more likely to offer to the field theoretical insights and new advances. The newer coach's most significant contribution to the profession is likely to be found in enthusiasm and tactics. It usually requires years of seasoning before the coach is prepared to offer his insights to the profession in the forms of books, monographs and articles. Third, competitive debate programs require a high degree of stability to achieve noteworthy success. The special relationship bred among coach and debaters over seasons of intensive mutual effort is not easily transferred to a new person taking over the direction of a program. Moreover, the maintenance of administrative support and funding are threatened by frequent turnovers in the position of director of forensics. For all of these reasons, then, the forensics profession needs to be concerned about the professional status of its personnel.

An examination of the criteria by which academic personnel are typically evaluated may provide some explanation for the problems faced by debate coaches. The terms in which those criteria are phrased will vary from institution to institution, but it is suggested that two factors consistently emerge as critical. Some institutions pay lip service to a concept of "service" to the community, but little evidence exists that such a concept plays any significant role in administrative evaluation of faculty personnel. In general, two factors dominate.

Student load: Debate is, and I suspect always will be, something of an elitist activity. The dedication as well as intellectual ability required for success is too high to make it a mass activity. Debate will not even attract that much attention from students in honors programs. Too many of those are academic over-achievers who specialize in memorizing lecture notes. Besides, the time demands of debate might adversely affect their grade-point averages. When viewed against total enrollment of the university, debate will never involve more than a fraction of a percentage point of the student body.

Research: Debate is a time-consuming activity. Topic and case analysis, practice rounds and travel all conspire to fill the coach's time. There aren't very many free evenings to spend gathering data or struggling with a critical essay. And there certainly aren't any significant numbers of private corporations or government agencies interested in sponsoring research in debate. In fact, no one (other than forensics people) seems to care very much about what we do. It is especially frustrating for the coach who tries to write to discover that even academic journals may not be willing to accept a debate-oriented paper. This author once received a rejection from an SCA-sponsored journal with the comment that the material was of value ". . . only to the hot-house world of intercollegiate debate, . . ." and of ". . . no interest to the profession at large." (It helps to know that the same journal had previously accepted one of the author's papers on *ars dictamen*, an obscure aspect of medieval letter writing in which no one has been interested for six hundred years.)

We have lost control of our reward systems. By and large, informal observation (i.e., tournament gossip) supports the conclusion that debate professionals are not well compensated for what they do. Working with a team to get them to a point where they win a major national tournament

is a tremendous accomplishment. It takes an enormous amount of work. Yet, professionally, that work is not rewarded. If the time and creative energy required to run an NDT-oriented program for a year were put into research and writing, the coach could easily produce four or five articles of a quality suitable for referenced journals. There may be some among the readers who would argue with this point, and it is, of course, not the sort of question which is easily subjected to empirical verification. Yet the author believes that it is true. The single most important factor governing scholarly output is time, and that is just the factor of which a major NDT-oriented debate program is most jealous. Unless one has worked in or with such a program, it is difficult to imagine the amount of energy required. Those among the readers who have never been involved in traditional forms of scholarly research may also not appreciate the amount of work which can be accomplished without the burden of directing a debate program on one's hands.

Having established that a problem exists, and having demonstrated its significance, it now remains to consider possible solutions. To accomplish that, it is necessary to have some idea of the factors which caused the problem to arise. It is the contention of this essay that the major cause lies in the increased professionalism which seemed to mark debate coaching in the Sixties and Seventies. Many critics have bemoaned the demise of the amateur debater—the student who participated in two or three tournaments a year on a strictly regional level. The same forces which forced such a student out of forensics have had a similar effect on the coaching ranks. All of us tend to be motivated by success. It is difficult, if not impossible, to maintain one's dedication after several years of coaching losing teams. Yet to coach winning teams has come to mean that it's not possible to do much other than to coach debate. The time to write—except for writing cases—just doesn't exist. Even the time to do an adequate job of teaching advanced courses is hard to find. More and more it is typical to find the debate coach totally removed from the research activities of his or her departmental colleagues, and staffing two or more sections of the "fundamentals of public speaking" course.

For a summary of the problem, consider the following scenario. Two "bright and shining" young Ph.D.'s are hired into a department. One is the debate coach, the other is a full-time teacher. As this is a well-funded department, both receive released time from their teaching duties. The coach spends his released time in directing forensics, the other man begins to develop research interests. Several years pass. The coach has built up a solid forensics program. His students participate in 14–20 tournaments a year, and usually do quite well. The trophy collection has grown impressively. Last year his top varsity team qualified for NDT. His counterpart, however, has been equally productive in research. He has a resume padded with six or eight referenced journal articles and half-a-dozen convention papers. (Coaches don't usually go to conventions. If there isn't a tournament scheduled that weekend, the poor soul is so exhausted from 20,000 miles of annual travel that he seizes the chance to stay home and get acquainted with his family.) The time has come for promotion and/or tenure decisions. Who do you think is going to fare better? Remember, these decisions aren't going to be made by other forensics people. Within the department, if the coach has done a good job, his colleagues may have some appreciation of the effort he has expended. But what about college-wide tenure and promotion committees?

There is no denying that debate in the last two decades has become

more professional. In many ways that has been a good trend. But a price has been paid, and it is the suggestion here that the price may have been excessive in terms of the reward. By allowing the activity to develop along the lines which dictate that only the professional can achieve significant success, we have threatened the one group of people on which our future depends—the coaches. The young coach described in the paragraph above may be fictitious, but the problem he faces is not. The "publish or fall behind" reward process of the majority of institutions of higher education creates painful pressures to get out of coaching altogether. Many young debate coaches face that decision every year. Unless a system can be developed and implemented on a nationwide basis which provides full recognition of the scholarly and creative achievements of debate coaches, the brain drain will continue.

FORENSICS IN THE 1970'S—A RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

JACK H. HOWE

Intercollegiate forensics are now passing into their twelfth decade in the United States.[1] The three most significant of these decades would be the 1890's, the 1920's, and the 1970's. The 1890's did not witness the origins of intercollegiate debate, but they did experience its expansion, its formalization through the organization of leagues, the introduction of debate courses into the curricula of collegiate institutions, and the emergence of the directorship of forensics as a faculty assignment.[2] The 1920's witnessed the birth of the intercollegiate debate tournament at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas in 1923[3] and rapidly thereafter the beginnings of "national" tournaments for both debate and individual events; the origins of the cross-examination style of debate are, of course, also found in this decade.[4] The 1970's was a period of ferment during which intercollegiate forensic activity engaged in a corrective process in an effort to attune itself to changing values and attitudes.

Two major motifs dominated forensic developments during the 1970's, and both were reactions to trends that originated in the 1950's and intensified during the 1960's. One development during the 1970's was the tremendous emphasis on individual events that so characterizes contemporary forensics; the other development was a shift in the format of intercollegiate debate and in the use of alternate styles of debate that permitted the pursuit of different goals from those sought in the previous decade.

Our era has experienced a staggering increase in the amount of information available on all subjects whether they be scientific, social, political or economic. As it pertains to forensics, the significance of this inundation of information lies in the fact that it coincided with two events: first, the appearance in the late 1940's of a truly National Debate Tournament, first hosted by the United States Military Academy at West Point and subsequently sponsored by the American Forensic Association, and second, with the selection of increasingly broad, complicated and overlapping national topics of a nature that tended to defy precisely limited definition, a trend that was both obvious and serious by the mid-1960's and which has continued without interruption until the present time. Given the goal of a

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[1] Bauer's research has placed the first intercollegiate debate (between Northwestern University and the University of Chicago) in 1872. Otto F. Bauer, *Fundamentals of Debate* (1966), p. 2. The Interstate Oratorical Association, which in 1980 held its 107th contest, began during the 1870's.

[2] Egbert Ray Nichols, "A Historical Sketch of Intercollegiate Debating: I." *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XXII (April 1936), pp. 213–220.

[3] Edna Sorber, "The First Debate Tournament," *The Forensic*, 41 (March 1956), pp. 67–69.

[4] J. Stanley Gray, "The Oregon Plan of Debating," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XII (April 1926), pp. 175–180.

national title and the vast dimensions of the topics with which they were working, debate squads were encouraged in the massive research that came to symbolize what is now called, justly or not, the NDT-style of debate. Soon abandoned were the introductions, conclusions and other pleasantries that had been considered important elements of debate delivery in previous decades. So much material was available that systems of squad research replaced the independent research of the earlier debater. By the late 1960's, intercollegiate debate revolved around information-gathering and information-processing, at the expense of other skills formerly associated with the activity. A debater was expected to have evidence on every point that could be raised; the possession of such quantities of evidence caused him to yield to the temptation to read as much of it as possible during his allotted time. This, in turn, frequently led him into an incomprehensible delivery pattern that made it a mockery to consider debate a form of speech communication.

If this background material refers only to debate, it should be remembered that debate was the core and essence of forensics programs during this era. After a brief, and ineffective, attempt to replace debate with discussion in the early 1950's, no further threat to the supremacy of debate emerged until the end of the 1960's. Competition in individual events existed during this time, but it was as an adjunct of a school's debate program and the students' preparations were supervised by a faculty member whose primary task lay with debate, or in the case of larger institutions, sometimes relegated to a graduate student. Debaters might or might not do individual events, but it was the rare squad member who wished (or was allowed) to confine himself just to individual events.

The initial reaction to this state of affairs arose in the area of individual events. In its dimensions and its implications, this was nothing short of a forensic revolution. The situation in the late 1960's was almost akin to the proverbial chicken and the egg. Which came first? Was it that the prospective squad member recoiled at the amount of work and relentless pressure to which he would be subjected as a debater and in individual events found an outlet better suited to his interests and the demands of outside employment, or did the forensics director perceive the situation and commence providing more individual events opportunities so that a squad member could have an active career in forensics without engaging in debate? Without doubt there was interplay between these two factors. Certainly as more individual events tournaments appeared, individual squad members and then whole programs turned increasingly to this aspect of forensics.

The impact on debate during the 1970's was steady and apparent. Surprisingly, perhaps, the total number of intercollegiate tournaments held each year remained virtually constant during the decade. This number was estimated to be 397 for the year 1970–71,[5] 388 for 1974–75,[6] and 385 for 1978–79.[7]

Dramatic changes occurred in the nature of these tournaments as the decade unfolded, however. Using a system separating "Debate" tourna-

[5] Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, X (1970–71).

[6] Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, XIV (1974–75), p. 2.

[7] Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, XVIII (1978–79), p. 2.

ments (those offering only debate), from "Speech" tournaments (those offering both debate and other events) and "Non-Debate" tournaments (those not offering debate and which were overwhelmingly "Individual Events" meets with only an occasional Student Congress in this category), the percentages of the total number of tournaments held altered as follows:[8]

	Debate Ts.	Speech Ts.	Non-Debate Ts.
1968–69 season	55.0%	37.2%	7.8%
1972–73 season	51.1%	34.0%	14.9%
1975–76 season	38.2%	38.4%	23.4%
1977–78 season	36.5%	35.0%	28.6%
1978–80 season	33.4%	36.9%	29.7%

The author believes the flight from debate during the 1970's was a rebellion against the excesses to which NDT-style debate had succumbed, but the movement also received tremendous impetus from the organization of national tournaments just for individual events.

Seth Hawkins of Southern Connecticut State College organized the first national individual events tournament, holding it at Ohio Northern University in April 1971 and attracting entries to six events from twenty-one schools located in eleven states.[9] The scope of the geographic coverage, the number of individual events, the absence of debate, and, most importantly, the existence of achievement qualifications for admission to the tournament made this a unique development in American forensics. It was repeated with even greater success the following year.[10] It was, however, the third of these tournaments, held at Eastern Michigan University in April 1973 that really fixed the "Individual Events Nationals" as a major force on the forensic scene. Not only was the attendance at that tournament impressive (65 schools),[11] but also the National Forensics Association was formed (giving the tournament the support of a permanent organization) and the number of events offered expanded from seven to nine (where it still remains).

In 1978, the American Forensic Association launched its own National Individual Events Tournament on somewhat different principles and with slightly different events from that sponsored by the National Forensic Association. Since that time both of the national individual events tournaments have flourished and the forensic community does not seem greatly perturbed by the fact that there are each year two "national champions" in each of the major individual events.

Accompanying the development of national individual events tournaments was also the proliferation of individual events. In 1970–71, 535

[8] Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, XIX (1979–80), p. 96.

[9] Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, X (1970–71), pp. 80, 84.

[10] Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, XI (1971–72), p. 5. [In April 1972, 32 schools from 15 states participated.]

[11] Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, XII (1972–73), p. 82.

instances of various individual events being offered were reported in *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results.*[12] By 1978–79, this figure had grown to 1674,[13] and individual tournaments offering thirteen or more events were not uncommon. Individual events, and separate individual events tournaments, secured a firm hold on the forensics scene during the 1970's.

If the first response to the dominance of the NDT-style of debate was a withdrawal from debate altogether, the second response was an attempt to salvage debate by providing alternatives to the NDT-style for those who wished to realize other goals than those promoted by that style. This response centered around the work of The Cross-Examination Debate Association which began operations on a small scale in the fall of 1971 and grew steadily throughout the decade until by the end of that time approximately one-quarter of all debate tournaments in the country were either offering CEDA exclusively or in conjunction with NDT-style debate. This organization had its roots in the far west and while by the end of the decade the greatest strength of the association still was to be found on the west coast and in the Rocky Mountain area, CEDA tournaments could also be found in all parts of the country. In adopting the cross-examination format for debate, CEDA sought not only to make a break with the NDT-style, but also to utilize a more interesting form of debate better suited to the audience debating that CEDA wished to encourage. CEDA debate topics tended to be narrower than those used in the NDT-style and it was another of CEDA's objectives to promote a better balance among argumentation, analysis and evidence than was found in other contemporary debate, while the development of a communicative style of delivery (hopefully even taking advantage of opportunities to revive the use of wit and humor in debate) was of paramount importance.

The National Debate Tournament followed the lead of CEDA and adopted the cross-examination format for debate in the 1975–76 season, and immediately this had a tremendous impact on debate throughout the country. Within a year of this NDT decision to convert to cross-examination debating, the Tournament Calendar of the American Forensic Association reported that of 230 tournaments listed in the spring calendar that were offering debate, 109 would be using cross-examination exclusively while another 28 would use that and the traditional style conjointly.[14] Since that time abandonment of Oxford-style debate has proceeded apace until it now represents only a small percentage of the debating done in this country.

It cannot be said that CEDA was able to halt the declining interest in debate during the 1970's, but there is no doubt that without CEDA that decline would have been more precipitous. The author can document several instances of schools who have centered their entire debate program around CEDA and can likewise cite instances of schools that had abandoned debate but were brought back to it because of CEDA. Were it not for debate tournaments that are exclusively CEDA, the percentage of total

[12] Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, X (1970–71), pp. 87, 88.

[13] Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, XVIII (1978–79), p. 105.

[14] Jack H. Howe, Editor, "AFA Calendar," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, XII (Spring 1976), p. 199.

tournament activity occupied by debate tournaments would be even smaller than it is.[15]

It would be rash to say that CEDA during the 1970's realized the objectives it set for itself. But in striving for them, it exerted an influence on the NDT-style of debate and at the same time established itself as a major force on the forensic scene.

The 1970's, therefore, represented growth and new directions for American forensics. The chief developments of the decade would appear to be permanent in nature and salutary in effect.

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[15] Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, XIX (1979–80), p. 96.

FORENSICS IN THE 1970'S: A RETROSPECTIVE

THOMAS J. HYNES, JR.

To describe in any fashion events in which one has played some part is always an enterprise that must be approached cautiously. Henry Kissinger observes that participation in events provides the historian with special insights into the nature of observed events. At the same time, he warns that such participation often produces bias, unconscious or conscious, in the observer's remarks.[1] Hopefully, I have taken to heart Butterfield's warning for the "19th century gentleman" historian in this retrospective view of forensics during the 1970's.

> It is pleasant to see him give way to his prejudices and take emotionally, so that they splash into color as he writes; provided that when he steps in this way into the arena he recognizes that he is stepping into a world of partial judgements and purely personal appreciations, and does not imagine that he is speaking *ex cathedra*.[2]

It should be noted in the beginning of this essay that its focus will be on intercollegiate debate. This results from my familiarity with this particular aspect of forensics, and my reluctance to make pronouncements on portions of forensics about which I believe my evaluations would lack the appropriate expertise.

This essay is an attempt to place ten years of forensics into an exceptionally brief focus. Such a focus will be directed to two general trends which I viewed as important during the 1970's: Forensics and the Information Explosion; and Forensics and the Search for Academic Specialization. Both of these areas of concern are areas which have affected not only forensics, but all of higher education. It is the general contention of this essay that much of what we have observed in forensics over the last decade is as much the response of forensics to a changing environment as it is independently generated changes in the activity.

Forensics and the Information Explosion

For better or worse, the United States has become an information society. Scientific knowledge, for one example, continues to experience remarkable growth. While there has been some slowing of the trend, such knowledge increases by leaps and bounds. Lancaster and Smith report: "As long as science itself continues to grow, all the communication activities of the cycle must also increase at approximately the same rate. Price has pointed out that every time the world population doubles, the world population of scientists doubles about three times . . . ."[3] The expansion of the transmission of this science base information can be expected to increase with the development of machine readable data bases which be-

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[1] Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little-Brown, 1979), p. xxii.

[2] Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965), pp. 1–2.

[3] F. W. Lancaster and Linda C. Smith, "Science, Scholarship and the Communication of Knowledge," *Library Trends*, 27 (Winter 1978), p. 370.

gan to come on line during the 1970's. This, of course, does not consider all other bases of information that became more and more available to students during the 1970's. Swanson, for instance, remarks that, "There are, typically, well over 10,000 titles of published bibliographic works alone in a large university library. These provide some of the access routes to the millions of volumes of primary literature."[4]

It is in this context of bursting information that debate attempted to flourish. Its attempt to flourish came at a time when there was little change in the form of the activity.[5]

With such an increase in information, debate seemed to have had three choices. First, it could offer a radical and widespread change in the debate format. Given the traditional perspective of the debate community—Marsh's description of the traditional stock issues perspective as the rules of a conservative player may not be too far off in debate's collective attitudes toward the activity—a fundamental change in the format was unlikely. The meaning of fundamental here includes such things as the elimination of strict time limits, substituted for variable time periods, and things of this nature. Second, it could behave as if the increased information were not available, not increasing the amount of time and effort of research of the activity. For all the competitive drive of the debate community, this was also an unlikely response. If one program directed itself to a substantial level of research, it was unlikely that another program which chose to remain competitive would fail to do likewise. Third, debate could attempt to use the format in such a way as to maximize the transmission of information. I suggest that this was the prevalent response by debaters to the information explosion in the 1970's. That this response was taken seems to have had three important consequences. First, the primacy of verbal communication has been diminished. That is to say, when the maximization of information transmission, rather than the persuasiveness of a position has primacy, the perceived importance of the manner of presentation to both the debater and the receiver is reduced. Second, the rate of delivery has increased substantially. As the audience for debaters' arguments becomes more specialized—i.e., those sharing the assumed primacy of substance at the cost of form—the form of presentation could be similarly specialized.

The third consequence of the information explosion on debate in the 1970's is the obvious one—the need for evidence and support by debaters increased significantly. I for one find this to be a change of mixed blessings. On the one hand, the emphasis on evidenced support for debater positions seems consistent with traditional views of scholarship. I would argue that the scholar should avoid making observations and claims unless he has gathered evidence thoroughly enough to assure the accuracy of those claims. Or at minimum, that the scholar should begin with some theoretical assumptions, and then utilize data to support or to reject the validity of those assumptions. In short, we have increased the depth and detail of

[4] Don R. Swanson, "Libraries and the Growth of Knowledge," *Library Quarterly* (January 1979), p. 17.

[5] It is true that cross examination debate was introduced to the National Debate Tournament in the 1970's. I would argue that this was only a minor change in the format in the context of a discussion of dealing with information in a debate proposition. While the change was an important one educationally—there was some increased interaction between participants in each debate—I believe that it has little to do with the processing of information in academic debate.

research in debate with the result that successful debaters are more thoroughly conversant in materials of the debate problem area.

On the other hand, this may be a bittersweet gain. There are fewer and fewer students who are willing and/or able to devote the necessary amount of time to the debate activity. This is not to suggest that such debaters are not serious. On the contrary, they are most serious in their search for a complete education. In many instances, such students view that excellence in debate must come at the cost of other activities in educational settings. In brief, the thoroughness demanded in debate research during the 1970's may limit the participation of debaters to numbers far smaller than those of previous times.

In short, the increased availability of information in the scholarly community in general has made demands upon debate. It has demanded greater amounts of research, it has focused debate on greater information processing and less eloquence, and it has increased the speed with which information is transmitted verbally in a debate. Whether viewed as good or bad, the information explosion of the 1970's has had a profound effect on the debate activity.

The second factor which I view to have had an important effect on debate during the 1970's is what I will call the search for academic specialization.

Forensics and a Search for Specialization

A recent *Southern Speech* article by Bert Bradley discussed speech debate's role in the liberal tradition of higher education.[6] Yet it is precisely the centrality of liberal arts which was one of the central questions of higher education in many quarters during the 1970's. Fry and Kolb lament:

> For many years there has been an increasing trend toward specialization and vocationalism in higher education—a trend that has recently gained momentum from post 'baby boom' demographics, a tight job market, and multifaceted financial crises of institutions of higher learning. As these trends have developed, the liberal arts have been challenged by students, employers and alumni to defend the value of 'liberal education'.[7]

At the same time, debate has fallen prey to this same tendency. Debate has been called upon to justify its existence in such time of shrinking budgets, and calls for relevance. The reaction of some programs has been to offer debate in public forum settings—and leaving competitive debate behind. Others have chosen to become more deeply involved in the debate process, reaching out beyond the simple debate "rules" of George Musgrave to the debates about "paradigms" found in the debate literature of the 1970's.[8] Argumentation theorists have moved from requirements of the comparative advantage case to hermaneutics and argument. We have moved, in the words of Fry and Kolb "to an environment where our criteria for valid knowledge, selection and promotion of faculty, and choice of

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[6] Bert Bradley, "Speech Communication and Liberal Education," *The Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 45 (Fall, 1979), pp. 1–11.

[7] Ronald Fry and David Kolb, "Experiential Learning Theory and Learning Experiences in Liberal Arts Education," *New Directions in Experiential Learning* (June 1979), p. 79.

[8] Thomas J. Hynes, Jr., "Perspectives for Evaluation in Academic Debate," in Allan D. Louden, Ed., *Foreign Policy: A New Decade* (Winston-Salem, N.C.: Debaters Research Guide, 1979), pp. 2–8.

educational methods have become more specialized, scientific (some *would add the pejorative pseudo) and abstract."*[9]

We again have a situation where the movement of forensics has been reacting to its environment, rather than acting in isolation. National Debate Tournament Debating has become centered in somewhat esoteric arguments, sophisticated selection and alien to the uninitiated. While there is some sorrow that debate is not comforting to non-debate audiences, it is a situation not unlike the non-decision maker considering materials discussing micro-risk or the ATGM's, TGSM's C^3I in a military context.

I believe that debate in the 1970's found itself in a world of increasing specialization. The reaction to that movement toward specialization was greater specialization within debate. Stock issues could no longer satisfy those who were wishing to make debate on analogue for legislative/bureaucratic decision making or citizen truth-testing. As a result, debate changed dramatically. Again, I believe that some of the changes were bittersweet. Our students became better versed and more sophisticated in their analysis of public policy research. They also began to speak the language of DA's, PO's and other mystical symbols which were alien to outsiders. I fear that as the field of speech communication has become more sophisticated in its analysis in many areas, it has become less meaningful to those who are not intimately involved in the activity. The same has been true in academic debate. In both cases, I do not think that these changes have made the areas of inquiry any less valuable. They simply made them of interest to fewer people.

Let me summarize my view of debate in the 1970's. The last decade has brought many changes to debate. Our students are speaking faster. They are also most likely reading much more than was the case of debaters in the 1960's. Debaters in the 1970's were probably less likely to be involved in the number of activities of which their counterparts in the 1960's availed themselves. Debaters of the 1970's remained competitive, as were their counterparts in other debate eras. The environment—in which the rules were created, was all that changed.

I believe that many of the changes in debate which occurred in the activity during the 1970's were healthy. Debate is not without its faults—many of them requiring substantial action. But I believe that debate and the debate community have adapted well to an environment which demanded change, specialization, and the comprehension of a nearly incomprehensible body of information.

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[9] Fry and Kolb, p. 78.

THE SEVENTIES IN RETROSPECT: EVEN HINDSIGHT CAN BE MYOPIC

ANITA C. JAMES

Once upon a time a forensics coach arrived at a motel with two cars filled with tired students. Scheduled to compete later in the day in a tournament hosted by Sacramento State, all the students wanted were their room keys. Easy, you say, just register!

CLERK—"Good morning. Do you have reservations?"
COACH—"Yes. The name is James."
CLERK—"Nothing under 'J'. Could they be under another name?"
COACH—"Well, it's possible they're under the director's name—Natharius."
CLERK—"Nope. Nothing under 'N' either. Are you sure the reservations are for *this* motel?"
COACH—"Of course I'm sure it's this motel! Look, we're the forensics team from . . . ."
CLERK—"Just a minute. Here it is! Four rooms for ten people! They're under 'F' for Mr. Fouren Six."

A true story that even had the requisite happy ending. But I have never forgotten how unabashed the clerk was about the error. He had no idea what a forensics team was; why should he?

Indeed, why should he know? This story should strike a responsive chord in many of us who have explained that we do not dissect bodies as Quincy does, nor do we hunt for criminals of any sort. Outside the academic community there are relatively few people who can define forensics, with the possible exception of lawyers and politicians who often spring from such backgrounds. Within the discipline there are many who can define debate and argumentation but who do not link it with the more encompassing term of forensics.[1] This forum is not the place to argue about definitions. Instead, it is an opportunity to look at some of the achievements within the field in the last ten years; achievements that have increased our name recognition factor.

If you were asked to name the ten most significant occurrences of the last decade, what would you list? If you were restricted to events within the discipline, what then? To the area of forensics? Would it be easier to name five events? Have we even accomplished anything of significance in the past ten years? Of course we have, it is only that our perception of an event, and its importance to us, determines its ultimate significance.

In this issue of *Speaker and Gavel* there are a variety of interpretations of events and their effect on our activity. My role is to provide more material for the list-makers by discussing what I consider to be the five most significant actions taken by the forensic community during the seventies.

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[1] There is an underlying assumption that "our discipline" refers to speech communication. Although there are other disciplines where forensic programs are housed, the majority reside within speech and communication degree-granting programs. See also Richard D. Rieke, "College Forensics in the United States—1973," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 10 (Winter 1974), pp. 127–133.

(In some ways it would be more ego-gratifying to name personal team achievements, but alas, that information isn't being requested.)

Since most of us would not allow our debaters, extempers, or persuasive and informative speakers to state a harm or a point without discussing its relative importance to the audience, I am including a personal assessment of these five events. The events that I have found most important are:

1. The first national individual events tournament and the subsequent founding of the National Forensic Association to oversee its management.
2. The encouragement of alternative styles and propositions for debate as advanced by the Cross-Examination Debate Association.
3. The National Developmental Conference on Forensics.
4. The development of a national individual events tournament sponsored by the American Forensic Association.
5. The SCA/AFA sponsored Summer Conference on Argumentation.

In the following pages I will review the event and briefly discuss what I perceive to be its significance.

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It was during the 1969 Pi Kappa Delta National Tournament and Convention hosted by Arizona State University that discussion began on the idea of a national individual events tournament. The proposed tournament was envisioned as an alternative to the tournaments sponsored by the forensic honorary societies that offered debate and individual events. The idea was to provide competition in a greater number of events than was currently possible through the PKD and DSR-TKA tournament format.[2]

These first tentative ideas matured into the National Forensic Association which sponsored an annual national tournament attracting 135 schools and over 750 participants in 1979.[3] Additionally, the NFA is in the process of establishing a refereed journal as a vehicle for discussing issues pertaining to the coaching and judging of individual events, ethical considerations in competition, the role of forensics in the academic community and other concerns of forensic educators.

It may be impossible to determine whether the NFA has met or exceeded the expectations of its founder, Seth Hawkins. What can be determined is the viability of the tournament as an alternative not only to the honorary societies' tournaments but to the belated actions of the AFA and its individual events tournament. Conceived of at a time when national competition usually required membership in one of the honorary societies, the NFA tournament provided a high level of competition across a variety of events. The philosophy behind the tournament continues to be to provide an opportunity for many students to qualify for a national tournament, the end result of which is excellent competition and a positive experience for the student.

The significance of the NFA derives from its commitment to a program

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[2] An exception to these limitations is the Phi Rho Pi National Tournament for two-year schools, where competition is possible in debate, readers' theatre, limited prep, public address, and interpretative events. At the time PKD offered five individual events, DSR-TKA offered three, and PRP offered six events. See also Jack H. Howe, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, 10–18 (1971–79).

[3] Data based on schools attending and the minutes of the General Assembly Meeting. These results qualified the tournament as the largest in the country in 1979 according to Howe, *ISTR*, 18 (1978–79), p. 6.

that is as broad in scope as possible, involving as many students, judges, and schools as are eligible to participate. In fact, it is partly as a result of the NFA's success in this venture that the AFA finally implemented its individual events tournament.[4] Although there are tournaments that rival or exceed it in the number of events offered, these tournaments are moving with the time and in the path opened by the NFA.[5] Started by Seth Hawkins, without the sponsorship of a parent organization, the NFA and its tournament exemplify many of the traditional aspects of our discipline—breaking new ground, acting independently, seeing and meeting the needs of students engaged in an educational activity.

2

A complaint that frequently finds its way into print in our journals concerns the withdrawal of debate from an audience-centered event to an activity that is closed to most audiences because of its jargon, verbal shorthand, and specificity. Citing the history of audience debates as inherent to the democratic process, authors urge a return to issues of more widespread interest, to slower delivery with fewer shorthand terms, and to a more complete development of reasoning and logic instead of evidence cards as the substitute.[6] Early in the seventies a response to the critics was formulated; a response not designed to revamp academic debate, but to create an alternative.

What Jack Howe suggested to his colleagues was tournament debate using a non-national topic that was also a non-policy resolution. Implemented for the first time in the fall of 1971, the Cross Examination Debate Association, as it is presently designated, is different from "NDT circuit" debate in several respects: (1) it encourages selection of a topic with a strong value orientation rather than a policy proposition; (2) its debate ballot rewards slower, more conversational delivery; (3) it emphasizes the development of logic and reasoning as responses to arguments rather than reliance on evidence; and (4) the topic is announced in the fall of the year and competition has ceased by early in April resulting in a season of only five to six months.

A natural part of the interest in CEDA is that students without the time to devote to national-topic debate now have an opportunity to develop argumentation skills at a more relaxed and realistic pace. Theoretically, both national topic and CEDA debate allow a student to enter the process anytime during the year. Actually, it is easier for a student to begin work on a value topic in mid-year because there are fewer cases to brief, etc.

In my estimation, the significance of CEDA stems from its challenging

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[4] James F. Weaver, "Comments From the President: Quiet Times, Significant Goals, and A Call for Involvement," *JAFA*, 13 (Fall 1976), p. 63.

[5] The national tournaments for 1979 were PRP with 75 schools, 500+ students, and nine events; PKD with 100 schools, 500+ students, and eight events; DSR-TKA with 45 schools, 250 students, and eleven events; AFA with 72 schools, 226 students, and nine events; and NFA with 135 schools, 750+ students, and nine events. Howe, *ISTR*, 18 (1978–79).

[6] Rather than digress into a discussion on the role of debate the reader is referred to such representative articles as Randall Fisher and Kassian Kovalchek, "Toward Humanizing Debate," *Speaker and Gavel*, 12 (Fall 1974), pp. 4–5; Paul Barefield, "Contemporary Forensics: An Appraisal," *S&G*, 8 (January 1971), pp. 35–38; and "WFA Position Papers," *JAFA*, 8 (Spring 1972), pp. 175–199.

of the *status quo* of the debate world, and its success in the endeavor.[7] Many of the characteristics surrounding the founding of the NFA are present in the growth of CEDA tournaments. It is an alternative that is succeeding where others have failed.

3

The publication of the book, *Forensics as Communication: The Argumentative Perspective*, in July, 1975, completed a project begun in May of 1971. The book is the report of the proceedings of the National Developmental Conference on Forensics. As such it carries the reader through the meetings and discussions of the 44 participants of the National Task Force Assembly convened at Sedalia Retreat House, September 1–6, 1974.[8]

By now, most members of the forensic community are familiar with the "Sedalia Conference." The first suggestions for the Conference were generated by the Western Conference on Forensics sponsored by the Western Forensic Association in May of 1971. Concerned with the role of "... forensic education as an academic resource of the American educational community,"[9] the Western Conference proposed that a national attempt be made to address issues facing forensic educators.

The issues were tangible ones faced by educators in conducting their classes, administering their programs, counselling their students, and working with their non-forensic colleagues. The issues addressed at Sedalia included the future roles and goals of forensics, theory and practice, research and scholarship, and professional preparation, status, and rewards. The Assembly adopted a series of recommendations for each major issue ranging from increasing minority participation to encouraging graduate programs in directing forensics.[10]

In assessing the significance of the National Developmental Conference on Forensics, it helps to review George Ziegelmueller's concluding statements in the Winter, 1974 issue of *JAFA*:

> When the final Task Force Assembly meets in August, it will not be its purpose either to defend forensics or to revolutionize it. The Assembly's objective will be to make constructive suggestions for improving and strengthening the educational process of forensics. Ultimately, however, *the effectiveness of the Task Force report will depend upon the clarity of its vision, the persuasion of its case, and the cooperation of the forensic and speech communication profession.*[11] (Italics mine.)

What is the assessment? The ballot count is incomplete. Throughout this country, educators are encouraging their undergraduate and graduate students to examine the activities they are engaged in; graduate students and faculty are designing research programs that look at the attitudes, behaviors, motivations, and rewards of and for participants. But a familiar theme

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[7] At the end of the 1978–79 season more than 102 schools and between 350–400 students competed in tournaments offering CEDA debate. Howe, *ISTR*, 18 (1978–79), p. 83.

[8] James H. McBath, ed., *Forensics as Communication: The Argumentative Perspective*, Skokie, IL: National Textbook Company, 1975, pp. 170–174.

[9] George W. Ziegelmueller, "The National Developmental Conference: A Status Report," *JAFA*, 10 (Winter 1974), p. 119.

[10] McBath, *Forensics as Communication*, pp. 12–49.

[11] Ziegelmueller, "Status Report," p. 120.

is playing in the background—do more, as well as better, research, adapt new methodologies and paradigms, encourage more students to participate, generate more administrative support, and find new funding sources.

The job is not over. The publication of the Conference proceedings simply changed the focus for implementing the recommendations from the Task Force to the larger force of forensic educators.

4

When James Weaver won the presidency of the American Forensic Association in the spring of 1976, he defined five personal and five organizational goals.[12] One issue that appeared on both lists was the establishment of an individual events tournament sponsored by the AFA and liaison with the other organizations "... in the forensic community, such as CEDA, NFA, NFL, DSR-TKA, PKD, etc."[13]

For several years there had been talk at the annual business meeting concerning sponsorship of a tournament. When the NFA successfully negotiated the hazards of such a tournament and prospered, the AFA decided to act. In outlining the philosophy and structure of the tournament the AFA chose a different path from that taken by the NFA and used the NDT for its model.

The philosophy for the tournament derives from its use of the NDT as the model. With the country divided into nine regions, and qualifying occurring through either a trio of pre-district tournaments or through the district qualifying tournaments, the predominant philosophy is analogous to that of the Marine Corps—"the few, the proud, the brave." A comparison of the number of students to schools at the AFA and NFA nationals in 1979 indicate the results of the differing philosophies. For the AFA there was an average of three students per school and for the NFA the average was six students.[14] To argue for one system versus the other is essentially to make a value judgment about the nature of the rewards for forensics participation. The AFA sponsors a tournament that is much smaller and more restrictive than that sponsored by the NFA; however, some forensic directors send teams to both tournaments.[15] The goal of creating a liaison is completed, but the philosophical differences mitigate against ideas of a merger within the immediate future despite entreaties from the AFA.[16]

Regardless of one's value judgments about participation, it is still important that the AFA finally implemented its version of a national individual events tournament. In so doing, the AFA has given official recognition to the growth of individual events participation and its own philosophy.

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[12] Weaver, "Comments," pp. 63–64.

[13] *Ibid.* The reader will notice that no mention is made of working with Phi Rho Pi representing the two-year schools, an oversight that occasionally surfaces to plague the college and university forensic community.

[14] The AFA tournament was attended by 226 students from 72 schools and the NFA tournament with 750+ students and 135 schools. Howe, *ISTR*, 18 (1978–79).

[15] It is interesting to note that the comparative standings of schools that attend both tournaments are reasonably consistent.

[16] One early meeting was in San Francisco in November, 1976 and a second such meeting occurred in Minneapolis in November, 1978. The outcome of both meetings was an increase in understanding of each association's tournament philosophy but no substantive "meeting of the minds."

As if signalling the end of the decade, the SCA and AFA sponsored the Summer Conference on Argumentation in July, 1979, at the Rustler Lodge in Alta, Utah. Whereas the Developmental Conference in 1974 sought "... to chart future directions for forensics education,"[17] the purpose of the Summer Conference "... was to bring together interested scholars from around the country to share ideas about argumentation in three areas: Argumentation and the Law, Argumentation Theory and Criticism, and Argumentation and Forensics."[18]

As a means of providing a degree of continuity between the two conferences there were twelve individuals who attended both conferences.[19] The presence of these "dualists" created an atmosphere of interest in how things had developed in the five years separating the conferences, yet did not envelope the Summer Conference in an air of *déjà vu*.

The Conference was more concerned with the role of argumentation in a variety of settings than the role of forensics *per se*. The format was designed to allow for more concentrated, in-depth discussion than is usually possible at a convention. The relative isolation of the lodge further facilitated continuing discussions after a formal panel adjourned.

It is too early to ascertain the significance of the Summer Conference in any detail; however, it is possible to make a few suggestions. A continued willingness by scholars to share their ideas and work with others ought to be encouraged. An awareness that the areas of argumentation and forensics education must scrutinize themselves is critical as we enter the decade of the eighties. The attempts to discuss traditional concepts and offer alternatives is indicative of growth and adaptability, essential characteristics for survival. It can only be hoped that the experience was of sufficient value as to propagate itself. In future conferences it is essential that the concerns of other members of the forensic community also be given voice. The problems of those working in individual events, for instance, were only peripherally discussed and should be given closer attention.

At the beginning of this article a rhetorical question asks, "Why should people know what forensics means?" Some of the answers are found between that question and this conclusion. Members of the forensics community have a variety of skills necessary for survival in a changing environment. My list of noteworthy events from the seventies is brief, but these events are characteristic of the abilities of our colleagues. There is a willingness to seek new avenues of experience for our students, to challenge the *status quo* with new ideas, to promote healthy change in the activities we coach or teach; in short, to move ahead.

The talent is available for years to come as the Summer Conference made clear—the average age for participants was probably in the low forties. Some of the brightest, most highly motivated students on campus participate in forensics, thereby developing skills that will aid them in their later careers. The threats of accountability verbalized throughout the seventies will follow us into the eighties. The challenges will take on a different guise: inflation and recession, declining enrollments, and fiscal cris-

[17] McBath, *Forensics as Communication*, p. v.

[18] Jack Rhodes and Sara Newell, eds., *Proceedings of the Summer Conference on Argumentation*, Salt Lake City, Speech Communication Association and The American Forensic Association, 1980.

[19] This count was derived from examining lists of participants for both conferences as printed on pp. 171–174 of *Forensics as Communication* and pp. 6–7 of the *Proceedings*.

es. Our ability to meet the challenges has been tested in the seventies and will be more sorely tested in the coming decade. During the seventies we began to be more unified even as, in some instances, we followed divergent paths to our goals. The utilization of the "asembly bonus effect" of more output from a group working together than from the same people working individually will assist us in facing the challenges and developing cooperative, informed solutions. After all, we have an excellent track record!

RETROSPECTIVE: FORENSICS IN THE 1970'S

KASS KOVALCHECK

The decade of the 70's in forensics actually began during the 1966–67 academic year with adoption of the national debate proposition, "Resolved: That the United States should substantially reduce its foreign policy commitments." This topic, directly and indirectly, ushered in most of the practices and problems we now have because it permitted the affirmative, for the first time, to both define the terms and select the topic.

Prior to this topic, affirmative teams were expected to debate the totality of the resolution. While individual cases might vary, negative teams remained relatively free from having to debate limited and narrow portions of the proposition. But the topic on foreign policy commitments altered that freedom. Judges quickly perceived that it was unreasonable to expect an affirmative team to deal with the totality of the topic, and few doubted that such changes as recognizing Communist China, ending the Vietnamese War, pulling troops out of Europe, or even altering the world's monetary system were not significant. Negative teams, then, had to be prepared to debate four or five topics, each requiring separate analysis, separate evidence, and separate plan attacks, and this multiple topic approach was the harbinger of the 70's.

Clearly, the changes did not come all at once. Several more narrow and specific topics restrained the impulses of the 1966–67 debate year, but by the time of the 1971–72 topic, "Resolved: That greater controls should be imposed on the gathering and utilization of information about United States citizens by government agencies," the precedent had been established. Judges now made a variety of decisions about what constituted a legitimate affirmative case, and those decisions determined the course of intercollegiate debate. The most important of those decisions was that significance was not to be determined in relation to the topic but in relation to the impact of the plan. In the past, for affirmatives to demonstrate they were advocating a significant change, that change had to be significant in terms of the whole topic area. Thus, a change in education policy had to reflect on the whole of education; an alteration in police powers had to be significant for the totality of law enforcement; a reduction in foreign policy commitments had to be significant in terms of all United States foreign policy commitments. The more recent standard of significance relates only to the impact of the plan. Currently, even if the change itself is actually insignificant, the plan is judged to be legitimate as long as the results are significant. The result is that while requiring seat belt use is not significant in the totality of consumer product safety, the saving of 10,000 lives is significant. Application of wage and price controls only to the trucking industry is not significant for the whole American economy, but the impact of trucking on the economy is significant. Changing the management of our forests only affects a fraction of land use in the United States, but has a significant impact on inflation and housing. This change in judging standards broadened already broad topics and allowed for a continuous expansion of the limits of the topic.

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Because of the changing nature of topic interpretation and the resulting multiplicity of topics, a variety of practices soon appeared at intercollegiate debate tournaments. The most noticeable changes related to evidence. An exponential growth in the topic area required an exponential growth in the amount of evidence. In the early 1960's a debate team might be competitive nationally with as few as 1,500 pieces of evidence; by the mid-1970's competitiveness required 6,000–10,000 pieces of evidence, and many teams doubled or tripled or quadrupled that amount. The sheer weight of evidence altered the nature of debate tournaments. Debates could no longer be held within an hour time limit. Since they had more evidence to deal with, debaters needed time between speeches to make sure they had the right evidence. When one debater took time for such preparation, the opposing debater took even more time. After this escalation of delay resulted in a 2 hour and 45 minute elimination round at a major tournament, the debate community instituted the 10 minute preparation time rule, now virtually standardized. The additional 20 minutes of preparation time was far from the only problem created by the increasing amounts of evidence. Fifteen hundred evidence cards could be moved easily from room to room by two debaters. Eight sample cases or twelve sample cases or twenty-eight sample cases posed a new mass transportation problem. Even an amount of evidence modest by current standards required debate teams to make two trips. Debaters also took longer to set up their evidence and longer to refile their evidence and longer to put their evidence back in their cases. Ignoring the problem of judges who now read all the evidence presented in the debate (debaters can be refiling while the judges are reading), the one hour debate of past days now takes two hours, and most tournaments find it difficult to meet this new scheduling standard.

The evidence requirements have also taken their toll on debaters' personal lives. The idea of evidence sharing was not the creation of the 1970's. Prior to this time many debate coaches believed in the virtues of standardized files and group research. Other coaches, however, believed that all debaters should do their own work, and the 1970's ended that as an option. Even the most diligent of debaters cannot research all the areas now topical. Even with the sharing of evidence, demands on a student's time can become unreasonable. Assuming a debater attends only twelve tournaments a year, and that those tournaments do not conflict with final examinations, they represent at least one-third of the weekends available for the academic year. And a weekend is not enough since tournaments now take four days including travel. The academic year, excluding final examinations, has between 196 and 210 days, and this hypothetical debater might be traveling for 48 of those days, or about 25 percent of the school year. Now, for the remaining 75 percent we add in the search for evidence, practice debates, analysis sessions, making up for lost sleep, taking missed examinations, and then doing the normal amount of work required of college students, and we begin to understand why debaters might not graduate in four years (fortunately, the NCAA cannot ask us questions about "normal progress toward a degree"). Even if we accept that some students assume these burdens, make it to the NDT, receive their Phi Beta Kappa key, and go to the law school of their choice, those debaters who are only slightly below this standard face problems. For all of them, devoting time to any activity other than debate becomes a near impossibility.

The ever increasing amounts of evidence also brought about changes in the actual debates. Intercollegiate debaters have probably always talked

too fast, argued trivialities, and abused evidence. Debate is, after all, a learning process. The growth of evidence, however, has increased all these problems. With more and more debaters examining narrower and narrower portions of the topic, an even greater emphasis has been given to time economy, efficiency, and speed. Most debaters, and their coaches, seek to achieve these goals by advance preparation—analysis of arguments and writing of briefs. These practices have improved part of intercollegiate debate. Some of the shoddy and incomplete evidence used in the early 1960's would not last for five minutes in today's debate. Debaters are much better at challenging both the results and methodology of studies. And, in truth, debaters probably know more about how to do research than they did in the early 1960's. But these improvements have not come without a price, and it is, at the least, arguable whether the price is too high. When the amount of evidence causes debaters to strive for efficiency and speed, it also causes them to avoid the stylistic niceties that could make debate pleasant to hear. Transitions have evaporated, jargon has expanded, and the trivial has become important. Because of the reliance on evidence, debaters tend only to know what exists on 4 × 6 cards, and because evidence is shared and copied and stolen, the 4 × 6 cards are not reliable. While the emphasis on evidence has eliminated some of the shallow research of the past, it has also introduced the incredibly sloppy analysis of the present. Judges are now told that being employed is bad for you, that improved housing in the United States will starve millions in the third world, and that permitting the sale of pornography will lead to nuclear devastation. Judges may inwardly chuckle at these arguments, but few of us have not voted for them, and we vote for them because they may be the only arguments to emerge from the muddle of speed, efficiency, and evidence.

The growth in the amount of evidence, and the results of that growth, seem the hallmarks of intercollegiate debate in the 1970's. They also pose problems for the future of debate. All universities are concerned about the future financial situation, and one of the questions that may be asked about debate is how many people it serves. The question debate coaches will have to answer is how debate can serve a larger number. Few people have failed to observe the decline in the number of debaters or in the number of teams attending tournaments. At least part of that decline has to be because fewer college students want to debate. It is not unreasonable to assume that some of the disinterest in debate is related to the ever increasing amounts of evidence required. After all, what reasonably intelligent 19-year-old college student would want to surrender all their free time, sacrifice their classes, abandon a social life, and then spend weekends carting sample cases up and down stairs while becoming cholesterol ridden at the sign of the golden arches. Some still do, because of the challange debate offers, because of the friendships it fosters, because of the education that can be gained. But that number seems in decline, and in order to change that decline, debate coaches may have to change debate.

FORENSICS IN THE SEVENTIES: IMPLICATIONS FOR DEBATE

ALLAN D. LOUDEN

Given the diversity that falls under the general title of forensics, it would suprise me if there were consensus on what has transpired this last ten years. Each of us involved is a product of our experience and necessarily interprets the seventies differently.

My own viewpoint is biased by ten years of coaching under a variety of circumstances. I have had the opportunity to experience coaching in the West and the East, from a small community college to a major university and from individual events to NDT debate. Each of these activities, for its own reasons, has been rewarding. Basically I am optimistic about the future and positive about the past. I am, however, intolerant of those who are convinced that the activity is on the brink of disaster and that many practices of the last few years are the antithesis of our goals. The decade has not witnessed any noticeable decline in the number of active collegiate programs. Certainly several have ceased to exist but others, revived or new, have taken their place. Rather, the major trend has been one of emphasis. Jack Howe's annual publication, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, documents a changing emphasis from traditional debate to alternative forms of debate and individual events. While these forensic activities are valuable and to be encouraged, they have often come about at the expense of debate. It is my bias that the choice should not be an "either-or" proposition. Involvement in debate offers unique forensics experiences which are well documented. In this essay I will examine some of the reasons for and implications of this trend. I am optimistic but hopefully not a Pollyanna. The trend of the seventies may foretell serious problems for the debate community and the forensics community in general.

Entry Barriers

Those of us who are concerned with the development of debate might ask ourselves why there has been a reduction in its emphasis. We believe in the activity as an educational tool unequaled in academia, but have restricted these benefits to a selected few. If we really believe it can benefit many educationally, why not make it a more accessible activity?

This exclusion operates for individuals and in turn for entire programs. Of course we pay lip service to a broad-based, open-access program but our behaviors belie these "professional statements." Take for instance the beginning individual. It is a rare occurrence for a student to initiate his/her debating career in college. When a person does it is noted as a truly interesting phenomenon. The fact we treat it as a curiosity indicates the problem. This trend toward debate as a highly specialized activity has been intensified during the last decade. It is almost as if we hang out a sign which reads, "only those already trained need apply." The "entry barriers," as expressed in time demands, learning a specialized language, and foregoing other experiences (social and academic), act as an overly

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selective screening device. For example, consider the sophisticated gamesmanship debate now requires. "Theory" in a round when it enhances arguments is exciting and useful, but all too often it becomes a circular maneuver which camouflages the argument. These games are not simple and it takes several years of internship to master them. As these games are filtered to all levels of debate, we continue to erect entry barriers which are exclusionary in nature. The debate in-group becomes a poker club in which the ante is so high that fewer and fewer can play.

I would hope one is careful in interpreting these observations. I am not arguing to abolish the poker club, but rather to have several tables with varying ante's, all of which have a chance of success.

Sophisticated, specialized debate offers too much to dismiss it as many have done. It provides an outlet for the especially dedicated and skilled student. The focus on excellence also has enriched theoretical developments in argumentation and debate. Reducing the whole of debate to a common denominator would be to give up many of its most important functions. Still, we need to keep the entry costs from being prohibitive. The health of debate, as always, is dependent on providing broad educational benefits to a diverse constituency.

It appears, however, that many individuals and entire programs have reached the conclusion that the entry barriers are too high. Our goal should be to provide a continuum of opportunities, each with sufficient rewards to indicate their importance. The reality, all too often, is for a particular program to provide only one level of opportunity. Often we are a NDT program with two or four debaters, a CEDA program only, or an individual events squad only. This is perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the trend.

Ethnocentrism

The forensics community can be characterized increasingly as several communities. Each emphasizes a particular "communication style" which is claimed superior to other aspects of the activity. This Balkanization is typified by the comments I hear from various segments of the activity. Typical of the suspicion and either-or thinking are comments like:

> "CEDA is saving debate from the NDT types whose view is narrow and self serving", 'or,
>
> "CEDA is for those who cannot make it in 'real' debate."

With individual events the ethnocentrism (I.E. and debate people) is even more pronounced. Discussions are invariably phrased in terms of I.E.'s *vs.* debate. It seems to me inherently dangerous for any element of the community to believe that it has the truth. Each of the "communication styles" has merit and can contribute to a fuller understanding of our overall educational objectives. Ultimately it is the student who is penalized by not receiving a broader view of the activity.

The argument is for a broad scope within programs, not just among programs. I do not mean to suggest that we should or do always get along or that we share total consensus about the goals of forensics. Experimentation and diversity are valuable but not when they operate to discredit other parts of the profession or limit student opportunities. Often there are legitimate constraints which dictate the evolution of a particular program, but most often these "reasonable excuses" only serve to justify the predisposition of the director. The "hard realities" are seldom inherent and

their implications for student participation, transferable skills and humanistic development are even less often objectively assessed.

Implications for High School Debate

Not only is college highly dependent on healthy high school programs, I believe we have a special obligation to aid in their development. The issue I want to raise is not the typical one of workshops, handbooks and judges for tournaments, but the more fundamental question of personnel. I think most would agree that a program's health is more dependent on personnel or "the coach" than any other single factor. States with strong college and university debate programs are often correlated with strong high school programs. As an example let me explore a situation with which I am familar. Montana High School forensics and debate is remarkably vibrant. Nearly *every* public high school maintains a broad competitive program. The coaching pool is primarily the product of broad-based programs in the universities and colleges during the late 60's and the first part of this decade. When the high schools needed a coach there was someone to hire. The vitality and expertise could be maintained. Although personnel is not the sole reason for this growth, the availability of trained teachers was an important contributor. This pool is no longer available as Montana's colleges and universities followed the trend evident nationally. Personnel is a necessary if not sufficient ingredient for the high schools' success, but Montana will face a shortage in the eighties.

Nationally, as debate becomes increasingly specialized and the entry barriers become more prohibitive, the very schools affected are the ones who have traditionally supplied the teachers.

Our highly proficient NDT programs are not producing this personnel. If programs continue only to be interested in a few highly motivated, goal-directed students, this situation will grow more severe. If a high school wants to hire a coach with sufficient training to maintain a functioning program, I literally do not know where to suggest they look. My fear is that the demise of broad participation debate programs in the colleges which traditionally supply teachers will translate into the eventual demise of strong high school systems. I don't believe we have reached this point, but the trend gives us pause for concern.

Conclusion

The seventies witnessed not a reduction in forensic activity but rather a shift away from traditional debate. With the exception of limited regional revivals this trend appears to be significant. The health of debate and the general forensic community may depend on our ability to grasp the implications of these developments.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON DEBATE IN THE 1970'S

JACK LYNCH

About a year ago, one of the debate teams which I coach was engaged in a quarter final round in what was alleged to be one of the better tournaments. A balcony at the rear of the auditorium where the encounter was held enabled me to listen, more or less alone beyond the view of the participants. The debate itself was typical—250 word per minute speeches with the usual "in house jargon" designed to spread everyone out of the auditorium. During the course of the debate, three foreign students joined me in the balcony. Their initial reation to the debate was one of amazement; they weren't quite sure what they were listening to! After listening for five minutes or so their mood changed and, judging from their reaction, the affair was one of the funniest things they had run into for some time. Admittedly the example is a little extreme, but frankly I was embarrassed at having contributed to the activity which produced such laughter. More than anything else, the episode emphasizes what an arcane exercise much college debate has become.

It is probably unfair to suggest that intercollegiate debate abandoned communication with the outside world during the decade of the 1970's. Rapid delivery has been with competitive debate for awhile; at least two studies every decade since the 1950's have concluded as much. It is the view of this observer, however, that what is now usually regarded as championship caliber debate has crossed its own sound barrier and this has created a communication gap between the debate world and the real one. It is not simply that debaters talk fast but also that ten minute constructive and five minute rebuttal speeches do not accommodate much of the complex and complicated theory and practice that has become a part of many debates. While much of this may be a virtue on the printed page, the same may not hold true for the spoken word. Finally, conspiring with this is a proliferation of verbal shorthand and debate jargon which too often dehumanizes debate. Opponents and colleagues lose most of their identity; even the first affirmative speech is simply "IAC." Perhaps the real culprit is that debaters attempt too much; in the process persuasion gives way entirely to evidence and logic.

The 1970's revealed a growing tendency by debate teams to avoid dealing with the real issues on any given debate topic. Happiness, perhaps, has always been an affirmative case against a negative team without evidence or an original thought! Dictionaries or recourse to lexicons enable the enterprising to fit all types of subjects into any debate topic. The transcript of the 1971 final round at the National Debate Tournament on wage-price controls surprised the Wage-Price Stabilization Board. The affirmative case on migrant workers was an approach to this topic that bore little reality to the practical problems the government agency thought might have been debated. The linguists may have gone too far. A semblance of sanity may have been restored by the introduction of parameters on college debate topics. There is, however, significant opposition to any official in-

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terpretation of the debate topic. Parameters are, however, probably a necessary evil.

Inflation, as it did elsewhere, also struck the debate community in the 1970's. We began the decade with gas selling at .35 per gallon and that is only a memory now. Youth airfares fell by the wayside. Supersaver and other special airfares offer some relief to the ever increasing price of air travel but travel costs are hurting debate programs. It is doubtful that debate budgets have increased as much as travel costs. Another byproduct of inflation has been that most long established debate tournaments have all grown smaller. It is doubtful that we will ever see an affair like the Emory tournaments of the late 1960's with 160 or so competing teams. One tournament that did increase in size was the National Debate Tournament which grew from 46 to 62 teams. The rationale for enlarging the NDT was the dubious assumption that college debate had improved enough to warrant the increase but it was probably more related to those vested interests who wanted more than one team from the same school. It did not increase the number of competing schools.

The past decade witnessed the enactment of a code of ethics for intercollegiate debate. One target of the American Forensic Association sponsored project was the alleged debate tournament for profit. Other regulations were aimed at the conduct of tournament directors involving such things as scheduling, spending entry money on alcoholic beverages, etc. More significantly, regulatory efforts are now trying to police standards of debate evidence. The AFA and the National Debate Tournament Committee have developed tighter evidence standards which contain penalties for fabrication and misuse of evidence. Even with definite standards, however, it remains to be seen how tough enforcement will really be. There is always a tendency to forgive unless deliberate intent to fabricate can be established.

What has remained constant in debate activity are highly motivated and dedicated students. If anything, the premium on research increases. To the extent that problems exist in debate, debaters create few. Debate coaches make and enforce the rules. There is a tendency among the coaching fraternity to complain about what goes on and yet go along so as not to rock the boat.

Finally, I look at debate as a house which I have lived in for over three decades. Perhaps it would be a better house if I possessed more wisdom. Like the big band era of the 1930's and 1940's, the good old music will probably never return. As elsewhere, change is inevitable. I would like to see one thing return, however. Why not make some effort to communicate with the outside world again. Will debate become an even more arcane exercise? Perhaps the communication process would improve if college presidents did more at a debate tournament than deliver a three minute welcoming speech or if deans attended district qualifying tournaments.

INTERCOLLEGIATE DEBATE: TEN YEARS OF SOUND AND FURY SIGNIFYING NOTHING

JOHN T. MORELLO

In April of 1970, I competed in my last intercollegiate debate. Like so many of the rounds preceding that one, my partner and I lost. Nevertheless, I quickly reflected on my career as a debater and thought that the experience had been both enjoyable and useful. I was sorry to see it end.

In April of 1980, I judged my final debate in my eighth season as a debate coach. As I filled out the ballot, I wished that it would have been my last effort as a judge. Certainly, there are debaters and other coaches who would hope the same thing! While I always found debating pleasurable and challenging, about all I can say about judging the modern version of intercollegiate debate is that it is a tedious and depressing task.

The activity which I spent four years pursuing as an undergraduate has undergone a massive transformation in the past ten years—one which I feel constitutes a change for the worse. The decade of the 1970s impresses me as a time when debate became something which it should not have become. In the remainder of this essay, I shall attempt to outline the changes which I think have helped to diminish the quality of intercollegiate debate as a student activity.

Debate Became a Boring Activity

Modern college debates are exercises in banality. They are stale, humdrum efforts repetitively performed in the same monotonous manner from team to team, round to round, and tournament to tournament. Most debates sound like all other debates. Style and originality are the lost canons of debate as it is practiced in intercollegiate tournaments.

What makes debate dull is clear, and like the weather, it is a problem about which many people talk and which few ever bother to correct. Debates are boring because debaters pay too little attention to the question of delivery. Before we go any further, let's put aside all this jazz about hypothesis testing, existential inherency and counter-warrants to consider a few indisputable facts. Debates still occur *orally*. All debates are carved up into a series of *speeches*. Judges *listen*, and assign *speaker* points. Tournaments award trophies to the top *speakers*. The activity continues to rely on oral communication, yet its practitioners pay less attention than ever to the development of skills associated with clear and persuasive oral discourse.

One need only listen to a modern intercollegiate debate to see how little delivery matters any more. Debaters may present speeches, but they don't really speak. They rant, they rave, they scream, they spit, they pound tables, and they do a lot of gasping for air. According to the accepted patterns, the proper posture for debating is with one foot propped up on a chair, the head tilted downward at some plastic sheets, and an arm draped over a podium. Very elegant, these debaters.

If debaters are concerned about any delivery factors at all, it is probably

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rate which occupies their attention. Here the axiom appears to be "the faster, the better." While there are no comprehensive statistics on the subject, there is some evidence which suggests that today's debaters talk quite fast. My own recollections of recent debates confirms the feeling. The final round of the 1976 National Debate Tournament featured speaking at a rate of 250 words per minute.[1] A recent study found that speaking rates in one tournament ranged from a low of 180 to a high of 295 words per minute, with an average rate of almost 220 words per minute.[2] These figures easily eclipse the optimal speaking rate as determined by experimental research.[3]

Fast delivery makes debates very boring exercises. Because everyone insists on talking so fast, there is no artistry or beauty in the kind of discourse produced. It merely unfolds, and most debaters appear to care less whether the judge happens to appreciate, understand or believe the arguments advanced. Heaven forbid that a debater should wonder if the judge seems to be enjoying the debate. Instead, "in the style of debate taught at Georgetown and other schools these days, the emphasis isn't so much on persuasive rhetoric as it is on burying opponents in a barrage of evidence."[4] And what sort of interest can there be in watching two teams try to bury each other under piles of note cards and briefs? Reading fast takes no imagination—only practice. Where imagination, thought, analysis and clear reasoning are absent, the result is a debate speech befitting of most of our major teams and tournaments.

Finally, rapid delivery makes debate boring because of its effect on the quality of argument produced. Explanations are a thing of the past, as debaters cite truncated labels followed by blurb quotations from authorities qualified by those telling words, "Smith in '78." Debaters call upon the judge to supply all sorts of missing links from arguments—everything from steps in the reasoning process to details and facts which "anyone judging the topic ought to know." It is a sad state of affairs when the judge has to be as knowledgeable as the debater in order to merely comprehend what is taking place. Where else in the world of "rational" discourse do we expect the adjudicator of argument to be the case and subject matter equal of the advocate? In other instances, it is expected that the advocate persuade the adjudicator by marshalling together important facts and opinions which are carefully tied together into reasoned and thorough arguments. Intercollegiate debaters offer their judges no such luxury. Instead, the judge is forced to provide the missing details or else be burdened by a discourse so incomplete and compressed that it is virtually worthless on its own.

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[1] "1976 National Debate Tournament Final Round," ed. by Stanley G. Rives, *The Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (Summer 1976), p. 47.

[2] Janet M. Vasilius and Dan DeStephen, "An Investigation of the Relationship Between Debate Tournament Success and Rate, Evidence, and Jargon," *The Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 15 (Spring 1979), p. 201.

[3] The normal rate of speech is between 120 and 180 words per minute. See Joseph A. DeVito, *Communicology: An Introduction to the Study of Communication* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), p. 430. There is some evidence that speech in excess of this rate has a detrimental effect on listener comprehension. See G. M. Goldhaber and C. H. Weaver, "Listener Comprehension of Compressed Speech When the Difficulty, Rate of Presentation and Sex of the Listener are Varied," *Speech Monographs*, 35 (March 1968), pp. 20–25.

[4] James J. Unger, quoted in "Teen-Age Debaters Sharpen Their Skills, Enter Boot Camp," *Wall Street Journal*, 25 October 1977, p. 37.

Long ago, Aristotle instructed orators about the enthymeme—a pattern of reasoning where the rhetor left his/her audience to supply the details and premises which the speaker felt were understood and accepted. Intercollegiate debaters, however, go far beyond this kind of rhetoric. The end product is argument which elicits meaning in the minds of but a few other debaters and some judges, and undoubtedly some of those in the latter group don't really understand but are afraid to say so for fear of being branded as incompetent and thereby banished to the low-rent debates in the pits of the power-matching.

Sadly, I think that debaters recognize the futility of their delivery habits. Following most speeches, especially rebuttals, debaters employ as much overtime as they are permitted in the effort to plead calmly and slowly for the acceptance of an argument which had been rattled forth at some earlier juncture in the debate. Why bother with these overtime perorations if there weren't nagging doubts about the persuasiveness of the speedily developed half-arguments which had muddled-up the debate?

Debate Became Isolated in Its Own World

The 1970s saw debate retreat from what others have called the "real world." Earlier last season, I heard an Undersecretary of the Navy welcome debaters to a tournament at the Naval Academy. He complimented the group for participating in an activity which would foster the ability to "think on your feet." He left before hearing the millionth mindless reading of the "beef DA." He also told the audience that debate "will teach important skills in organization." He unfortunately missed the debater who, after getting some cards out of order, shouted out "go to number next." The Undersecretary concluded by noting that debate helped develop a skill which he had found very useful in his job—the ability to "speak extemporaneously." He might have been a little confused had he witnessed two teams reading sheet after sheet of preprepared briefs at each other.

Those remarks haunted me as I judged that weekend. Later, at the National Debate Tournament, the Undersecretary's words lived again as a dean from the University of Arizona greeted the best debate teams in the nation with a similar salutation. Did the debating at that tournament live up to the dean's expectations? Not really, and fortunately, for both the dean's sanity and the tournament's credibility, he left before attending any debates.

Why did these people have such lofty notions about an activity which frankly produces few of the behaviors they expected to find? I think the problem is that we have stopped caring about how the outside world views our activity. We happily develop strategies and tactics with little regard for how these gimmicks affect the perceptions outsiders have of us. And we are quick to make excuses for those behaviors which the uninitiated see as ludicrous. Early in the decade, a popular rationalization for the way we were was that debate trained students in dialectic, not rhetoric.[5] This bromide has since been replaced by the slogan that debate, like the Marines, is for the few and the proud.[6] None of this intellectual snobbery

[5] Steven Shiffrin, "Forensics, Dialectic, and Speech Communication," *The Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 8 (Spring 1972), pp. 189–191.

[6] William E. Rickert, "Debate Poiesis," *The Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 14 (Winter 1978), p. 143.

denies the fact that most debates are gibberish to outsiders. The excuses, instead, function as alibis for the avoidance of change.

How can we really be proud of what debate has become? Why does the winner of the National Spelling Bee receive more public recognition than the winners of the National Debate Tournament? Why do most tournaments occur in virtual anonymity? Why does a public debate, those rare treats carefully staged for the pedestrian audience, bear such little similarity to the "real thing" of intercollegiate debate? Why do some coaches live in the fear that the administrator holding the purse strings will one day ask to see what all the money in the forensics budget subsidizes? The longer we keep debate isolated from the outside world, the longer we compensate for the aberrant excess of the activity by trying to hide them, the greater the chance that we will push intercollegiate debate to a place in history alongside oratorical declamation and syllogistic disputation.

It need not be that way. A recent *New York Times* article told of an educational innovation at a small college in Iowa. All students are required to debate, and "whether the course is philosophy or something as presumably straightforward as mathematics, students at William Penn College find that in order to pass, they will not only have to learn the material but they will have to marshall it into arguments and go into verbal combat with fellow students."[7] What a unique idea, and not unlike the hopes which gave birth to competitive forensics in this land.[8] At William Penn, however, the project seeks to help those students who, in the opinion of college president Dr. Gus Turbeville, "don't know beans about doing library research, and . . . don't know a thing about getting up in front of a group to talk."[9] Intercollegiate debate, while still pursuing the former objective, has all but forgotten the latter.

The 1970s passed with debate growing into an increasingly boring and isolated activity. If the activity is to survive in the future, some changes are needed. As debate tournaments dwindle in size, we see the concomitant rise in individual events contests. There is a lesson in that for all debate coaches. As we watch debate become so much drudgery, students with a desire to practice public communication turn to less tedious outlets. Forensics is, after all, a student, co-curricular activity. In the 1980s, we must work to put a little enjoyment back into debate. Advocacy should be exciting and challenging, and it can be if we are bold enough to leave behind the legacy of the last ten years.

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[7] Jill Smolowe, "Debates are Focus of College Curriculum," *New York Times*, 26 February 1980, p. C-4.

[8] For a discussion of the forces which helped develop intercollegiate debating, see Don F. Faules, "The Development of Forensic Activities," in Don F. Faules and Richard D. Rieke, eds. *Directing Forensics: Debate and Contest Speaking* (Scranton: International Textbook, 1968), pp. 9–18. One factor cited was the absence of any curricular interest in public speaking skills at institutions such as Harvard and Yale.

[9] Quoted in "Debates are Focus of College Curriculum," p. C-4.

THE 1970'S: A DECADE OF CHANGE

MICHAEL PFAU

The decade of the 1970's wrought a profound impact upon all facets of American society—including competitive debate. The changes produced were such that competitive debate will never be quite the same again; indeed, as a result of changes initiated during the 1970's, the 1980's may well prove to be a watershed decade for competitive debate. In this essay I will examine three broad categories of change in competitive debate during the 1970's: the proliferation of information, a reassessment of the quality and value of debate, and some endemic alterations in the debate process. These categories are not intended to be all inclusive; to me, however, they represent the more important of effects of the 1970's on competitive debate.

The Proliferation of Information

The explosion of pertinent information in all sectors—but especially in the social sciences—has probably had more impact upon debate than any other change unleashed during the 1970's. This phenomenon, of course, has left its mark *on all societal institutions*—not just competitive debate. This is *the era of the specialist*; and this is *the era of empiricism*! Society's decision-making apparatuses have become virtually clogged with highly relevant and often empirical information. The net result of this information explosion is, to say the least, ironic. There is no clear evidence that it has produced better decisions. There is, however, substantial data to bolster the claim that it has narrowed significantly the range of persons who are capable of processing and utilizing the available information in order to make intelligent decisions on public policy issues. The net result may be an increasingly frustrated citizenry.[1] Ponder for a moment the information sophistication which is required to make an informed and intelligent judgment in any one of many issue areas—for example, the future of nuclear power as an energy option; various energy alternates, including gasohol, solar, biomass conversion, and others; a national draft versus an all-volunteer military force; environmental protection; and so on. How can one render an intelligent decision without being very well versed on the myriad of issues—and their foundation of analysis and data—relevant to each question? Even U.S. Senators and Representatives find themselves at the mercy of their legislative aides whose job it is to locate and synthesize available data on specific issues and to recommend positions and/or stratagems to their bosses.

The information explosion has not inundated the decision-making process overnight. It has been making inroads for two decades—especially in

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[1] Frustration levels are at an all-time high. A 1979 Pat Caddell poll found that two-thirds of the population considered themselves isolated from the political process, and nearly 80 percent expressed distrust of their political leaders. For a detailed examination of this data and analysis, see Patrick H. Caddell and Warren E. Miller, "Crisis of Confidence," Public Opinion, v. 2 (October/November 1979), pp. 2–16, 27–40 & 52–60.

the social sciences. The burgeoning number of social scientists, and the increased emphasis on empirical and original research, coupled with a sharp increase in the number of conduits for their findings, has produced a wealth of information which was simply not available just a few years ago. Alvin Toffler offers a perspective on the proliferation of information:

> Today . . . the number of scientific journals and articles is doubling . . . about every fifteen years, and according to biochemist Philip Siekevitz, "what has been learned in the last three decades about the nature of living beings dwarfs in extent of knowledge any comparable period of scientific discovery in the history of mankind." Today the United States government alone generates 100,000 reports a year, plus 450,000 articles, books and papers. On a worldwide basis, scientific and empirical literature mounts at a rate of some 60,000,000 pages a year.[2]

This proliferation of information has resulted in three significant effects on contemporary competitive debate. First, the research burdens on the successful debater have mushroomed. Today's well-prepared debater must spend much more time than his counterpart a decade ago accumulating and synthesizing vastly greater quantities of information. This necessitates a more substantial commitment to competitive debate. Since more time is required for research and preparation for debate, much less time is left to spend on the other dimensions of the student's college life (i.e., academic pursuits, social activities, etc.). Today's well-prepared debater pays an increasingly dear price for competitive excellence. Second, the rate of speaking on the part of contemporary debaters has increased significantly during the past decade. The proliferation of information has inadvertently placed a much higher premium on coverage (a combination of the rate, and the efficiency, of speaking). This stems directly from the increased breadth and depth of the issues which confront the contemporary debater (the debater faces tougher choices today concerning the relevant dimensions of policy deliberations). The attempt to include as many relevant arguments as possible in a round of debate has itself produced two effects. On the one hand, some critics and observers contend that the rate of speaking has surpassed a tolerable threshold. Indeed some NDT speakers have been timed at just under 300 words-per-minute, which places them at or near the threshold of comprehensibility, according to the consensus of research on presentation rate and listening comprehension.[3] On the other hand, synthesis (the sorting out and simplification of issues and information in a debate) has become more difficult—for the debater and for the critic judge. In some cases the volume of specific pieces of information serves to confuse and obscure the assignment of issue import in a debate round.

The proliferation of information has generated a third broad influence upon competitive debate: an increasing dependence upon the subject area expert or specialist. Debate—like academia—is currently enamored with hard data drawn from empirical research (and there is an abundance of same). I see two immediate consequences. First, this dependence has resulted in a lopsided comparison between courses of action advocated by the affirmative and the negative. The affirmative's mandate is usually more

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[2] Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 31.

[3] For a summary of studies see Michael J. Beatty, Ralph R. Behnke, and Deidre L. Froelich, "The Effects of Achievement Incentive and Presentation Rate on Listening Comprehension," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66 (1980), pp. 194–195.

obscure—it is, more often than not, untested outside of the social scientist's "laboratory." One must extrapolate the benefits and consequences of an affirmative plan from limited experiences. Often a small experimental program serves as the basis for the affirmative's proposal. In such circumstances the affirmative holds a built-in edge since experts involved in such research efforts often develop vested interests on behalf of their programs. At other times there is no plan precedent per se, just a body of theoretical material. This is authored by so-called experts with a strong personal perspective toward a particular position. In either instance there is ample documentation in support of affirmative benefits, but a scarce supply of offsetting evidence on affirmative consequences. The present system's structures, in contrast, are tested under fire. The status quo includes known and often controversial elements. Its imperfections are readily documentable. Thus, any comparison of consequences between an affirmative plan as opposed to present system mechanisms is inevitably one-sided.

A second consequence of the increasing dependence on the data of subject area specialists concerns the importance of evidence in argument. One well-known colleague of mine has often admonished debaters (and fellow judges) that, "evidence does not in itself constitute argument." This position has much traditional appeal. Nonetheless, there is a notable trend, in academia and in debate, for the advocate's arguments to be subsumed in his evidence. The data is the argument; this is an *unmistakable trend* evident *throughout the social sciences*!

A Reassessment of the Quality and the Value of Debate

As a participant and coach in competitive debate for almost two decades, I have observed firsthand the evolution of this activity into its present form. I conclude that the contemporary process—and participant—is a superior variant. Today's collegiate debater possesses a topic (or subject) mastery superior to that of his counterpart a decade ago. This includes an awareness of, knowledge about, and research on the breadth and depth of the issues encompassed by debate resolutions. In addition, today's debater has a clear-cut superiority in process mastery. The contemporary participant is required to argue the theory and tactics of competitive debate in his rounds. As a result, the debate round has become *the forensics laboratory* envisioned by some a decade ago. Various theories are argued on a myriad of issues; a wide range of tactics are experimented with. The concepts which originate in the sterile confines of journals and seminars are given life in actual competition. I view this development as healthy. It demands that the participant master the intricacies of the debate process if he is to excel in tournament competition.

The nature of debate—and its value to those who participate in it—has changed during the past decade. This change is responsible for much of the controversy between those who attack and those who defend contemporary competitive debate. I maintain that the activity continues to teach all of the traditional skills—research, critical thought, inquiry, persuasion and others.[4] In my judgment, however, the activity's dominant value today lies in the inculcation of evaluative decision-making skills. These are the skills so desperately needed in today's information-oriented, highly technical society. Competitive debate imparts these tools better than any other

[4] Most argumentation and debate texts cite these and other benefits. Typical is Austin J. Freeley, *Argumentation and Debate* (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1976), fourth edition, pp. 20–26.

mode of undergraduate instruction and/or involvement. This, however, is not to say that the contemporary debater is being slighted in persuasive skills. I have witnessed techniques of judge adaptation on the part of skilled collegiate debaters which clearly belies this charge. I think that we must remember that the competitive debater operates in a unique setting—one that consists of receivers who are skilled listeners, capable of consuming and synthesizing vast quantities of information with maximum efficiency; who are familiar with the topic under consideration, and are (in varying degrees) experts in argumentation and debate. Today's debater is adept in adapting his presentation to this unique audience. In short, competitive debate instills in its participants the same skills as a decade ago with an important addition: more emphasis on evaluative decision-making tools!

Endemic Alterations in the Debate Process

Two largely endemic alterations in the debate process have produced inadvertent—but significant—effects on contemporary debate. The first concerns the changing nature of debate resolutions; the second involves the movement from a single, dominant decision-making system to a variety of alternative judging paradigms.

The nature of debate resolutions adopted for use in collegiate debate changed during the decade of the 1970's. First, the scope of resolutions broadened. Simply put, "affirmativeland" grew.[5] Today's resolutions allow for more varied affirmative approaches. This is, in part, a result of our own choice. We have approved resolutions of wide latitude in recent years. More often, however, untested topic wording has contributed to a broader resolution than anticipated. "Affirmativeland" has not, however, expanded into a vacuum. To the contrary, "affirmativeland" expanded at the expense of "negativeland." As today's negatives search for nonresolutional alternatives to an affirmative plan, they do so within a contracting field. Broader resolutions have simply devoured potential negative ground. Second, our resolutions have increasingly become statements of increment or degree. This was not always the case. Resolutions once emphasized the substitution of agents of action (i.e., the substitution of Federal for state-local responsibility for such functions as education, welfare or law enforcement; or the substitution of international for national responsibility in such areas as arms control, military intervention or resource development and allocation) or the mandating of definitive actions (i.e., abolish protective tariffs; replace the draft with an all-volunteer force, etc.). Today, by contrast, our resolutions are statements of degree—mandating some undefined movement toward some nebulous goal. Affirmatives in recent years have supported mandates to "strengthen consumer product safety"; "guarantee employment opportunities for all people in the labor force" (a common interpretation resulted in the substitution of the word "increase" for the term "guarantee"); "increase the ability of law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute felony crime"; "reduce the power of the Presidency," etc. John Schunk has characterized such propositions as calling for "quantitative expansions (or reductions)."[6] They all say essentially the

[5] David Zarefsky conveniently divides the totality of possibilities with respect to a given question into two spheres: "affirmativeland" represents the confines of the resolution, whereas "negativeland" includes all other alternatives.

[6] John F. Schunk, "A Farewell to Structural Change: The Cure for Pseudo-Inherency," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 14 (Winter 1978), p. 146.

same thing: resolved that the Federal government should do something more than is now being done in a particular domain. This type of resolution places the focus of a debate on what I call "the solvency gap"—a measure of the increment that separates the present system and the affirmative's plan. Both systems pursue the same goal, but the resolution mandates that the affirmative pursue it to a greater degree. The solvency gap is in essence, a measure of the deficiency of the present system in pursuing the goal in question.

The trend toward resolutions as statements of increment has limited negative advocates. It has made it increasingly difficult to defend present system alternatives. The problem is that the issues of inherency and topicality have become entwined. The solvency gap represents the margin separating what is topical from what is not topical. To bridge the solvency gap is to cross the gulf that separates the two. As such, it has become difficult to argue for an extension of the present system. If the extension is advocated well (i.e., if the present system, with repairs, would be able to pursue the goal in question as well—or nearly as well—as the affirmative), then the negative has achieved the mandate of the resolution. This negative approach, although traditional, poses special difficulties. It alters the basic question concerning inherency argumentation from, "Can the status quo solve the problem without the resolution?" to, "Can the status quo adopt the resolution?" The latter is clearly inappropriate. Schunk refers to such advocacy as "pseudo-inherency."[7] Resolutions of increment or degree inherently pose this problem. Clearly the nature of our debate resolutions has changed; and, as a result, the delicate balance between affirmative and negative has been altered.

The second endemic alteration concerns the movement from a single, dominant decision-making system to a variety of alternative judging paradigms. The traditional lenses, which require that an affirmative meet each of a set number of prima-facie burdens as the minimum requirement for an affirmative ballot, have given way to alternative decision-making systems: policy-making; hypothesis testing; and tabula rasa. Of the three, policy-making has emerged during the 1970's as the dominant system. Of course, such change carries with it residual impacts.

For better or worse the ascendancy of the policy-making decision system has changed competitive debate. First, it produced a shift in the focus of debates. Plan now assumes critical import. The decision-making equation is reduced to a simple formula: the comparative advantage(s) is (are) greater or less than the comparative disadvantage(s). All elements in a debate—save disadvantages—fall on the left side of the equation. Yet, it is seldom possible to reduce the left side of the equation to near zero against a well-prepared affirmative team. Hence, disadvantages take on importance as never before in debate. Negative teams rule out inherency positions for fear of contradicting their disadvantages. In some rounds disadvantages comprise the bulk of a negative's arguments, appearing in both constructive speeches. Second, policy-making also laid the groundwork for a new argumentative tactic (not seen prior to the 1970's)—the inherency turnaround. The inherency turnaround involves an extension of the application of cost and benefit analysis from plan to present system domain. Just as an examination of the affirmative's position is not complete without an exhaustive look at the consequences of their plan, a careful evaluation of the negative's position demands no less. In the last analysis the superior

[7] Ibid., p. 147.

alternative will offer the most desirable ratio of net benefit as opposed to net cost.

Conclusion

This essay has examined three broad categories of change in competitive debate during the decade of the 1970's: the proliferation of information, a reassessment of the quality and value of debate, and some endemic alterations in the debate process. While these areas of change are not intended to be all-inclusive, in my judgment they represent some of the most visible and significant alterations in competitive debate during the past decade. Indeed, debate will never be quite the same—and that is as it should be. After all, collegiate debate is a unique sub-system of college and university life. It is vulnerable to the forces of change which impinge the system of which it is a part. If contemporary debate is to remain a viable enterprise within the academic community, it must continue to evolve. I believe that it has–and that it will continue to do so. For change is the one constant in the contemporary environment.

TWENTY YEARS OF INTERCOLLEGIATE DEBATE: A PERSONAL REFLECTION

JACK RHODES

When I was asked to contribute this article to *Speaker and Gavel*, I felt a certain pang of middle age onset: now I would be writing the type of article that I used to read (very casually) by people I then considered to be old codgers reminiscing about the halcyon days of debate when giants walked the earth and judges were not afraid to vote negative on topicality. So be it. Perhaps these remarks should be entitled, "Reflections of a Middle-Aged Codger."

My first participation in forensics occurred in the fall of 1957 when I represented Lawton High School, Lawton, Oklahoma, in Poetry Reading at the Phillips University Tournament in Enid. After two years in individual events in Lawton, I went to the University of South Dakota for a B.A. degree and there participated in both debate and individual events for four years. It was an exciting time to be an undergraduate at South Dakota because we had a large number of witty and intelligent students involved in politics and occasionally in forensics. Probably the best known today are NBC reporters Tom Brokaw and Ken Bode and U.S. Senator Larry Pressler, with whom I debated in several tournaments.

The high school and college experiences had been so positive that, after going to the University of Texas to work on a Ph.D. in English, I decided to offer my services to the Texas debate program as a judge or assistant coach during the 1963–64 school year. After three years of coaching and completing the doctorate, I went to The Colorado College in Colorado Springs as an assistant professor of English; but my attention soon turned to forensics, which has no parent communication department at CC and relies on voluntary faculty support. After learning many of the fundamentals of program administration from Al Johnson at CC, I came to the University of Utah in 1970 as Director of Forensics.

Now, I have indulged in this two-paragraph personal history in order to give a framework to the rest of my comments. Please bear in mind that: (1) I entered this field through individual events and never debated at all on the high school level; (2) my formal training and advanced degree are in English Literature; and (3) until 1970 forensics had always been a secondary interest of mine. My perspective, then, has shifted considerably over the years, from that of a person primarily involved in regional individual events competition to that of one involved in many levels of both debate and individual events.

With this personal framework in mind, let me make these observations about how I think forensics has changed during my twenty-plus years in the activity. *First, I think we have moved from an era of generalists to an era of specialists.* By this observation I mean that we no longer seem to see the large numbers of students who could attain a reasonably high degree of proficiency in *both* debate and individual events. I attach no pejorative connotation to this circumstance; I am simply calling attention

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to it. It was not so very long ago, in an age of limited topics and less emphasis on the intensive research which now seems necessary for high-level debating on the national resolution, that top speakers from winning debate teams regularly entered and excelled in individual events contests. It seemed the rule rather than the exception that tournaments would feature both IE's and debate and that most students would enter both areas. But at the DSR-TKA conference in Denver in the spring of 1980, so few contestants were entered in both two-man debate and individual events that the tournament director realized he could even have scheduled those events simultaneously without causing inconvenience to any contestant. And the American Forensic Association has evidently recognized the reality of this form of specialization by scheduling its NDT and NIET tournaments on opposite coasts for the identical weekend in the spring of 1981. Nor is it uncommon for large forensics programs to have separate coaches for individual events and for debate.

This sort of specialization, of course, extends within debate itself and within the field of individual events. We have specialists in interpretation who have no interest in presenting extemporaneous speeches, and some squads have crack Readers' Theatre units that do no other individual events except perhaps an occasional Dramatic Duo adapted from their Readers' Theatre cutting. Within debate we have nationally-known CEDA teams that have never been introduced to their counterparts on the NDT circuit; they rarely appear at the same tournaments and seem to share very few common experiences or interests as debaters. Redlands, Northwestern, Kansas, Georgetown, and Harvard are among the strongest NDT-debate schools in the country. To what extent do their debaters share common interests with such strong CEDA programs as Northridge, Long Beach, Air Force, or Wheaton? Or with individual events strongholds such as Iowa State, Southern Connecticut, Eastern Michigan, or Ohio University?

There are many benefits to specialization, not the least of which is the students' ability to dig more deeply into material and, therefore, presumably to learn more about the chosen area. I do not advocate that we return to an era of fewer evidence cards; I applaud the dedication of NDT debaters who are interested enough in the activity to amass vast quantities of information. Nor do I think we should insist as directors that all debaters participate in individual events, though I have experimented with that notion from time to time. Specialization has been the order of the day in all aspects of life during the past twenty years, and I suspect that forensics simply mirrors that trend. There are, nevertheless, two objections which I have to our current state of forensics specialization.

(A) Fragmentation of the student community: I persist in thinking that there ought to be common interests among the CEDA and NDT debaters and that techniques of public presentation should be of interest to both debaters and IE students alike. The tendency toward specialization makes it difficult to get these groups together for the lively interchange that should occur. In fact, we seem to be witnessing suspicion and even hostility among these groups when there should be interchange and mutual learning.

(B) Fragmentation of the coaching community: This is the same problem as above, but its dimensions are wider in their implications. Coaches and directors obviously need to set a tone of mutual understanding so that students can learn from the cross-pollination I am advocating. But unfortunately, my experience is that CEDA, NDT, and IE coaches are becoming more specialized and more suspicious of each other and are not themselves

seeking opportunities for intellectual or social exchange. I noticed this about three years ago at the Utah tournament when I had assigned a judge, who identified himself with the CEDA community, to listen to a senior round of NDT debate. He was indignant, horrified, and rather upset that the tab room would even consider such an assignment and proclaimed, "I went into CEDA coaching so I'd never have to hear another NDT round as long as I live!" His reaction, lamentably, is neither atypical nor universally condemned. Just as many NDT coaches pale and grimace when assigned to a CEDA or IE round. But first and foremost, college coaches are educators and should, in my view, be able to accept a variety of judging assignments and allow their students to benefit from a wide variety of forensics experiences; arbitrary consignment of oneself to one area seems needlessly narrow and self-indulgent.

My second observation is this: *We spend a great deal of time in debate rounds debating about debate.* With the exception, perhaps, of some theorizing about the role of topicality, I can hardly recall a debate from my undergraduate days that seriously dealt with points of debate theory. Yet a majority of the rounds I hear today are quite likely to involve arguments about the validity or legitimacy of a certain approach: counterplans, counterwarrants, hypothetical counterplans, conditionality, turnarounds, game theory, and the like. *The Journal of the American Forensic Association* is a widely-quoted source, as are communication and debate textbooks, polls on parameters, and other artifacts of the profession. Debaters seem more interested than they once were in theory-building and in sophisticated discussion of the validity of their arguments.

Nor should one think that this phenomenon is confined to NDT debate. Since the adoption of the first value topic on the CEDA circuit in 1974–75, there has been a great deal of involvement with value theory in CEDA debating. We hear debaters accuse each other of "NDT tactics" when "value objections" verge too near the border of becoming full-blown disadvantages. Rituals have developed in CEDA, as in NDT, governing such issues as division of labor between first and second negatives and the "fairness" of a number of tactics.

Like the phenomenon of specialization, debating about debate has both its good and its bad points. I welcome student interest in the discipline of communication and think it is high time that some of the theories of the field be examined in the debate setting. Debaters should learn more about theory for their own edification and because a substantial number will become college or high school directors of forensics, charged with the responsibility of teaching some argumentation theory to their students in future years. On the other hand, debating about debate can cause students to lose their focus on more substantive issues in the round and can easily and frequently lead into a good deal of bickering over procedural matters. I find, as a judge, that low points are invariably reached in CEDA debates when the charge of "NDT tactics" arises and in NDT debates when debaters argue over theory from a squad block which they evidently do not understand. We must be sure that we are advancing theoretical knowledge, in short, with equal or greater care than we advance other arguments and should not be resorting to name-calling or pettiness.

My third observation is: *Forensics is an activity capable of great change and adaptability; it has a will to survive.* Occasionally the changes seem to come with glacial and agonizing slowness, but they do arrive. I refer to cross-examination debating, the proliferation of individual events, the advent of topic parameters, the involvement of the AFA in a national indi-

vidual events tournament, the Sedalia Conference, and similar developments. We have arrived in 1980 after a difficult struggle through a period when many programs were eliminated, when student governments preoccupied with *avant garde* ideas like day care centers decided to withdraw funds from forensics, when preoccupation with major crises like Viet Nam siphoned away the efforts of so many potentially good students and temporarily made forensics seem less "relevant" or "in."

Yet the activity has survived. Perceived demand has led to more emphasis on individual events and more tournament opportunities. Declining budgets and runaway inflation have breathed new life into regional leagues and associations hosting a larger number of smaller tournaments. The NDT will experiment in 1981–82 with an earlier tournament and a correspondingly abbreviated debate season for students with that emphasis. "Swing" tournaments have become a popular way of reducing overall travel costs while expanding the tournament opportunities. And programs once thought canceled have a habit of surfacing again at such schools as the University of Oklahoma, the University of Colorado and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

From this capacity for change I draw my most optimistic projections about the future of forensics. Because the instrument can change, it can hopefully also improve. Despite rising travel costs, ways and means can and must be found to provide competition for the largest possible number of students. Perhaps we can even find some ways in which narrow specialists can work toward becoming forensics generalists again, should the community deem that change desirable.

My final comment is reserved for a prognostication about the status of NDT debate: *In the near future, the imbalance must and will be redressed which currently gives an advantage to the affirmative team.* Surely we have all witnessed the change from the days when teams chose negative most of the time to the present phenomenon of having them choose affirmative most often. Debaters want to win, and they recognize the advantages in being affirmative, including defense of well-known territory, inability of the negative to find a compelling disadvantage, the arsenal of turnaround responses, and the liberal attitudes toward topicality on much of the NDT circuit.

But since debaters do, as I have said, want to win, they also need ways to win if they should lose the coin toss in elimination rounds; and they are beginning to develop those strategies. We are now witnessing such efforts as turnaround pre-emptions, counterwarrants, vigorous topicality arguments, elaborate counterplans which virtually ignore the affirmative case, generic disadvantages, and a barrage of negative maneuvers. The past five years have seen the development of the low-risk, high-disaster disadvantage which I characterize as, "Let's ignore that affirmative approach and talk for the next twenty minutes about something really interesting." As the barrage continues, the tactics are beginning to have some effect. And as the negative teams grope for strategies, they are beginning to find some which will win for them. In short, I do not foresee or advocate that this imbalance should be corrected by any rule, pronouncement, or committee; I think it will be the natural consequence of the theory-building which debaters and coaches will perform in order to win negative debates. I also foresee that, in due course, affirmatives will learn to counter these approaches and to respond effectively to them. And so debate will proceed, with each side gaining a momentary advantage and then losing it momentarily to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the other side.

It has been a long and rewarding time since Mrs. Ford encouraged me to read Robert Frost's *Birches* at that 1957 tournament in Enid, Oklahoma. But the fundamental principles of forensics seem not to have changed much: a commitment to public speaking, an interest in public affairs, an involvement with other students and coaches from other schools, a belief in the educational value of the activity, a tolerance for long hours of work and travel, and a desire to learn and to excel. College forensics in the 1980's will build on a tradition rich in these values. I am confident that the community will be even stronger when 1990 arrives.

IN RETROSPECT: FORENSICS IN THE SEVENTIES

LARRY G. SCHNOOR

Professor Jack Howe stated in the 1970–71 *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results* that the changing interest and values of students, along with the changing attitudes and emphasis of administrations, had forced an agonizing reappraisal of various aspects in the area of forensics. He concluded his thoughts saying "such continuing reassessment must, and will, characterize the decade ahead."

The decade to which Professor Howe was referring has ended and I have been asked to take a backward glance in an attempt to appraise the 1970's. In approaching this task, I drew upon my own experience as a forensic coach to support the statements that follow. As you read these views, I ask you to imagine how each of you would react to forensics in 1980 if you had been placed in isolation in 1970. The changes have been drastic.

The decade of the 1970's began in choas. Everywhere there were demonstrations against the war in Viet Nam, against the civil rights laws, against regulations of most kinds. It is little wonder that as one takes a backward glance, change is evident as the key word for the era. This change is also reflected in developments in the area we know as forensics.

It is my belief, if a forensics coach in 1970 had been placed in isolation and suddenly returned to the forensic world in 1980, the coach would find it hard to believe! In 1970, debate, as some coaches would define the term forensics, was top dog. Any school that had any reputation in the forensic world had a debate team. The area of individual events was hardly recognized. True, there were those tournaments that had original oratory and extemporaneous speaking, but they were minor events as the real purpose of most tournaments was debate!

During the early part of the decade, debate remained the main activity at forensic tournaments. However, in 1973, a development produced a change that has had far-reaching results. On April 28, 1973, the National Forensic Association was born in order to meet what was perceived as "a need in the forensic community." The establishment of the NFA tournament began to shape not only individual events, but also the complexion of forensics tournaments and the forensic world in general. The NFA tournament became an almost instant success and has continued to be the largest tournament in the nation.

Tournaments that had been traditionally debate oriented, began to add individual events to the schedule. The American Forensic Association, that had previously paid lip-service to individual events, suddenly became concerned. The AFA established a committee to examine the possibility of a national individual events tournament of their own. After years of planning, the first AFA tournament was held in 1978. Each year the tournament has increased in size, both as to the number of participants and number of schools.

The influence of the two national tournaments in individual events is easily apparent. In 1968–69, individual events tournaments accounted for approximately 8% of all tournaments. Just ten years later, the percentage

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had increased to 28%. This increase does not even reflect the number of debate tournaments that added IE's or IE tournaments that increase the number of events to include all of the events normally held at the two IE nationals.

One might believe that with the AFA and NFA national tournaments, the need for national competition at the individual level would have been satisfied. An examination of other possibilities indicates otherwise.

The national junior college organization, Phi Rho Pi, has always included IE's and continues to grow in size. In fact, many competitors that engage in the Phi Rho Pi tournaments, also compete in the AFA and the NFA tournaments. Pi Delta Kappa, a national forensic organization, also has continued to include IE as an integral part of its biannual conference. Our own organization, DSR-TKA, has made a tremendous change since 1970. At that time, our annual conference included two- and four-man debate, student congress, original oratory, and extemporaneous speaking. First, the oral interpretation division was added and at our conference in 1978, a full compliment of individual events was added. The number of students involved in individual events at the 1979 conference was equal to or may have even surpassed the number involved in debate.

The growth of individual events has created some problems that need to be recognized. Whether these problems can be classified as problems or benefits, is an individual judgment.

Tournament scheduling has increased in difficulty. How can you have both debate and IE's so students may compete in both? Longer tournaments have been the result but at the same time expenses increased. With budgets being stretched thinner and thinner, this added expense has resulted in schools going to fewer tournaments or going only to those that allow for the maximum competition, depending upon the emphasis (debate or IE) of the respective programs.

There are those who will claim the change is primarily due to dissatisfaction with debate as it was being practiced. Others will claim that they couldn't afford both a debate program and an individual events program and thus choose the program that would allow them the greatest success and/or numbers. Whatever the reason, IE has come of age.

The previous decade has produced numerous changes as we have seen. And with changes, new problems generally emerge. How well the forensic community is able to adjust to these changes will determine whether or not the coming decade will see the activity grow or diminish in both size and influence. It is my observation and prediction that the forensic community will be able to meet the challenge.

BREAKING AWAY: FORENSICS IN THE 1970'S

ROBERT O. WEISS

The decade of the 1970's in college forensics may be characterized as a period of breaking away from a rather severely uniform structure into what promises to be a much more open system. During these years, forensics began to provide a wider range of options for its participants and to be responsive to a broader clientele.

After all, what's a forensics program for? Fundamentally, at any institution the program is set up to serve the educational goals of that particular institution and the needs of participating individuals. Therefore, since academic institutions come with a wide array of such goals and needs, the interscholastic system is best judged in terms of its ability to provide the supporting environment necessary for their varying purposes.

To be specific, one retrospective view of the decade of the 1970's (the one reported here) would come from the perspective of a debate director at a relatively small liberal arts university with a long and strong forensics tradition. For such a school the aims of the forensics program coincide essentially with those of the liberal arts generally, including the enhancement of free and coherent thinking, a broad perspective on human affairs, a consciousness of values, adaptability to changing circumstances, and humane communication. From a liberal arts vantage point, the increasing options from which to choose appear to make possible a better implementation of these aims in the total forensics program.

By any objective account, of course, the forensics scene has been dominated by so-called "circuit" debate, which has obviously been found serviceable for the objectives of numerous forensics programs and has absorbed the energies of countless devoted participants. Still, for others, circuit debate has remained an impressive but distant world of its own, neither logistically nor philosophically nourishing to what we had in mind. Thus the newer developments tended to loom large in our perception of forensic reality.

One striking turnabout, for example, came in the sudden availability of cross-examination debate. Early in the decade even the Pittsburgh Cross-examination Tournament had disappeared from our view (maybe it was just the poor train schedules), and at the annual DePauw DSR-TKA Tournament, which had resolutely held on to just one round of cross-examination debate, complaints came in from coaches who argued that they were not able to attend because of the impossibility of getting their debaters ready for such unorthodoxy. Although the decision to utilize the cross-examination format in the 1976 National Debate Tournament provoked a too-massive tilt in the other direction, at least it represented an openness to change and allowed a debate director to choose more freely whether his or her students would benefit from cross-x or orthodox (or, better yet, both) styles of debate.

Other formats also became available. In recent years we have been able to participate in Protagoras tournaments without going to North Dakota, in forensic progressions, and courtroom debate, and there exists a rather

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expensive, but viable, parliamentary debate circuit. One-day tournaments and tournaments for "real" novices blossom here and there. Death did not come to our old friend, the student congress, after all, and although opportunities are hardly widespread, any school interested in legislative debate can put together a schedule incorporating model U.N.'s and other activities outside of the formal forensics orbit as well as DePauw's annual legislative assembly and the DSR-TKA National Conference.

Also bringing refreshing new opportunities was the healthy expansion of the Cross Examination Debate Association, spreading eastward like volcanic ash, promoting an increasing number of tournaments and bringing encouragement to like-minded forensics directors and students. Representing a reunion of rhetoric and dialectic, CEDA gives a debater the option of exploring value propositions, utilizing evidence in a sensible way, and even indulging in good-natured humor. Lighting the way for this promising development were, among others, a stubborn group of DSR-TKA sponsors who created and maintained the Contemporary Issues Division of the National Conference, a division which not only uses the four-person system (thus at least preserving respect for genuine conviction) and non-national propositions of value rather than policy, but even incorporates the 60-ish innovation of mid-tournament meeting through which participants might modify the proposition being debated.

Another thing which became easier to find in the 1970's was an opponent for an audience debate. For many years and in many programs the commitment to tournaments meant that there was no interest in audiences nor much ability to adapt to them. Now, through greater receptivity to the idea of public debate on the part of administrators and coaches, partly the result of student pressure, an institution can put together a presentable intercollegiate audience debating schedule without undue strain.

The most remarkable forensic resurgence in the 1970's was in the area of individual events, where many directors found new opportunities for their students as well as new cadres of students interested in these opportunities. Some whole programs were transformed. For any debate director who had been perspiring for years and returning home from tournaments with only a scattering of ashtray-like objects glumly received at moments of "elimination," the first witnessing of an individual events awards assembly with participants dancing down the aisles shrieking and hugging and returning with foot-tall trophies for things like 10th place sweepstakes was quite likely to produce a born-again IE conversion on the spot. The individual events boom brought with it a new corps of directors as well as participants, and the energies that went into the formation of the National Forensic Association and its national tournament stimulated the somewhat reluctant interest of the American Forensic Association and the expansion of individual events participation (and membership criteria) by DSR-TKA. In any event, the new and lively options in this area again produced the educational benefit of forensics programs more appropriate and relevant for the aims of a number of institutions.

Probably the best academic representation of the breaking away phenomenon was to be found in the general tenor of the conclusions promulgated by the National Developmental Conference on Forensics in 1974. Among the altogether sensible recommendations were such statements as these:

> Opportunities for experience in forensics should be provided for as many people as possible.

Forensics should be viewed as humanistic education.
Forensics has a societal responsibility . . . to provide training in adapting argumentation to a variety of audiences and situations.
Students should have the opportunity to participate in both debate and individual events.
More frequent use of alternative events and formats in forensics should be encouraged.

A variety of propositions should be used in academic debate. That it was even necessary to argue about these resolutions and set them forth formally is disconcerting, but the fact that they were agreed upon by the participants at the conference was indeed an encouraging sign.

None of the developments of the 1970's would have transpired, of course, without hard work on the part of individuals who saw needs to be met and who had substantial values to implement. One reason that the forensic environment had become relatively narrow in focus was that those who had alternative visions tended too often to abandon the field of forensics entirely or lacked the resources and energies to accomplish what they believed. Thus even those schools who sponsored "alternative events and formats" frequently received no support even from those who claimed to see their desirability. This is not to deny that every decade has had its elements of creativity in forensics, both within the NDT tradition and in strikingly valuable events such as Wayne State University's Debate Days in Detroit, quietly effective audience-oriented programs like the one at Murray State University, and the efforts of genuine educators such as Otis Aggertt working with unclouded vision in the field. Nevertheless, to create a new atmosphere in the 1970's, many concerned forensics directors had to roll up their sleeves and go to work.

In the Great Lakes area a major beacon was the existence of a sound and well-managed forensics program under the direction of Kurt Ritter at the University of Illinois. Not only did this program provide exceptionally fine training for its students and remarkable service to the surrounding community, but it was also a model of the kind of assistance which a large institution can provide to schools with fewer resources by sponsoring creative, philosophically sound, and well-directed events.

One other individual who has had a notable impact nationally has been Jack Howe, not only through his encouragement of the growth of individual events and his key role in CEDA, but also through the substantial visibility he has given to all kinds of forensics activities and achievements through the editorship of the AFA Calendar and *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*.

In any change or breaking away there are, it might be observed, natural hazards and clouds to be watched. Possible disads. There may, for instance, be a temptation to follow a new path simply because it is an easier one. Circuit debate is, whatever its shortcomings, a highly disciplined and demanding endeavor, while some of the appeal of impromptu speaking or split duos may lie in the apparent lack of preparation required. Or we may simply go where the trophies are. (One individual events contestant accumulated 135 trophies in a recent season). Superficial motives can be a problem.

Another hazard, perhaps at the opposite extreme, is the threat of a new rigidity or the symptoms of overemphasis which are already creeping into the national IE procedures and into CEDA, so that new activities may ultimately fall prey to the old malfunctions.

And a third hazard lies in a newly amorphous definition of the field of

forensics, a possible case of entropy with a concomitant diminution of purposefulness and a lack of consensus as to what forensics is all about.

However, even these hazards will remain minor difficulties if in breaking away we have established aims and activities which are adapted to the requirements of a diversity of forensic programs, to the needs of the students who want to take part, and to the goals of educational institutions and of a society dependent upon thoughtful communication. The decade of the 1970's augmented an educational enterprise whose value was already well recognized by moving with vigor into public and value debating, into individual events ranging from rhetorical criticism to oral interpretation, and into other activities which reflected a healthy humanistic impulse. This development represented a flexibility and maturity which forensics will need to be of value in the 1980's.

INTERCOLLEGIATE FORENSICS IN THE 1970'S: A PERSONAL ODYSSEY

TENNYSON WILLIAMS

It would be quite presumptuous for any debate coach to attempt to explain to his/her peers the course of intercollegiate forensics during the decade of the 1970's. Few of us have gathered the kinds of data which might reveal what the decade "really was like." Each of us necessarily has filtered his/her observations through highly individual perceptual biases. In my own case, limited experience prevents me from comparing the '70's to previous decades. In the face of these disclaimers, I still think that there may be some value in sharing my perspective on the decade most recently completed. Although the insights are mine, they are not necessarily unique; while the discovery process has been personal, the method may be instructive to others who seek to discover where we are and where we are going in intercollegiate forensics.

At the beginning of the 1970's, I entered college debate coaching ranks armed with little more than the stock issues and a zeal for competition. As I reflect upon that time, I am struck by how much intercollegiate forensics and I have changed; yet, at the same time, I wonder if either of us has changed very much.

Having been away from intercollegiate debate for five years after my undergraduate career, I returned to find that people were doing much more research than I had done and talking faster than my opponents ever had. I also discovered that the activity had quite vocal critics, including Wayne Brockreide, who described in this journal the reality gap he saw in tournament debate in 1970.[1] Brockreide was not alone then, and he has been joined by other critics during the decade. My own concerns about problems in forensics were responsible in part for my decision to leave coaching for an unexpectedly brief period during the middle of the decade. At the end of the decade I see little real change. Even a cursory glance at NDT final round transcripts reveals that debaters are talking even faster. In the 1971 final round the affirmative proposed federal income supports for migrant workers when the topic was wage-price controls, and the negative chose not to argue topicality.[2] In 1979 the affirmative proposed a federal program to increase employment when the topic was federal employment guarantees, and the negative argued that the plan was not topical.[3] The problems of the activity were real in 1970 and are still real in 1980, but the activity endures—probably because those of us who teach and administer programs remain committed to the notion that forensic training is valuable even when it is flawed.

Like so many others whose introduction to the field of speech commu-

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[1] Wayne Brockreide, "College Debate and the Reality Gap," *Speaker and Gavel*, VII (March 1970), pp. 71–76.

[2] Stanley G. Rives (ed.), "1971 National Debate Tournament Final Debate," *The Journal of the American Forensic Association*, VIII (Summer 1971), pp. 1–28.

[3] John K. Boaz (ed.), "1979 National Debate Tournament Final Debate," *The Journal of the American Forensic Association*, XVI (Summer 1979), pp. 29–67.

nication has been through competitive forensics, I have during the '70's moved professionally to the point that most of my teaching and research interests are in interpersonal communication. Unlike most of those others, I have not found it necessary to turn my back on forensics. Rather than seeing debate and interpersonal communication as radically different activities, I see debate as an opportunity for students to learn more about negotiation of meaning and self while they also learn to test ideas of public policy. At the end of the decade I find myself among the critics of debate,[4] but one committed to the endurance of the activity.

That critics remain does not imply that there have been no changes in intercollegiate forensics during the '70's. There have been a number of seemingly major innovations, many of which I have found myself supporting vociferously. While a member of the NDT Committee during the mid-'70's, I argued for allowing junior college participation in NDT activities. In retrospect I am amazed at the time and energy consumed by that issue. At the end of the decade, judging standards in NDT qualifying tournaments have not declined as some predicted, and no district has amassed a huge number of subscribing junior colleges. On the other hand, few junior colleges participate in district tournaments and only one has qualified for the NDT, which continues very much unaffected by our "earth-shaking" decision to allow junior college participation.

Similarly I was an early advocate of cross-examination debate; with others I saw it as a way to reduce the effect of "spread" debating and to make debate more interesting. Once the NDT adopted a cross-examination format, virtually all tournaments followed suit. I regret to report that I am still required to judge debates where the number of arguments seems much more important than their salience and quality, and I also find that cross-examination itself can sometimes be quite boring. Occasionally, however, I do find a question skillfully exposing weaknesses in argument, and I am encouraged to believe that the benefits of our decision to adopt cross-examination may await only the passage of another decade.

Not all of the changes have come via action of the NDT Committee. Reacting to what they considered to be the evils of "NDT debate," an ever-growing number of forensics coaches have turned to the Cross-Examination Debate Association's approach to intercollegiate debate. Founded in the early part of the decade, CEDA was intended to provide debating experience which deemphasized reliance upon research and placed a premium on arguing for "real" audiences. My own reactions to this new movement were at first quite negative: I saw it as being almost anti-intellectual. CEDA debate was characterized by inadequate support for claims, blatant emotional appeals unleavened by reasoning, and an avoidance of any semblance of organization. My concern then, and to some extent now, was that the evils of "NDT debate" were being replaced by an activity which encouraged glibness over reasoned discourse. At the end of the decade, I am both encouraged and discouraged by CEDA. It obviously has burgeoned to the point that some major tournaments have more participants in CEDA debate than in traditional topic debate, and the movement is moving rapidly eastward from its west-coast origins. To think that students may be tempted to seek the fun and glamour of debate without having to face its research demands and intellectual rigor is discouraging to me. However,

[4] See, for example, Tennyson Williams, "Reconceptualizing Debate as a Primarily Cooperative Activity," paper presented at the Southern Speech Communication Association Convention, Birmingham, Alabama, April 10, 1980.

I am encouraged by the observation that the more successful CEDA teams have begun to look more and more like good teams in traditional tournaments: they are doing more research; they support their claims; case structures are more apparent; reason often prevails.

Throughout the '70's I have sought ways to make research demands more reasonable for debaters whom I coach. The breadth of debate propositions has concerned others also, and the search for solutions led the debate community to the use of "parameters" explaining the proposition. The intent was to make the proposition more manageable. The effect has been to focus more attention on the issue of topicality without resolving the issue. I can see no lessening of the number of "squirrel" cases, although the parameters are useful to me in encouraging debaters I coach to be reasonable in their own interpretations of the proposition. For now we have decided that the parameters are not binding interpretations, and we pay them little heed.

By the time that I entered college coaching, research demands were such that squad research had replaced individual research as the norm. Concerned with maintaining high ethical standards for evidence, I found it useful to develop a squad consensus to guide research. That approach was successful for several years in avoiding problems such as evidence taken out of context. At the end of the decade, however, the proliferation of inter-school evidence trades poses real difficulties for those of us who think that debaters ought to be able to give reasonable assurances as to the authenticity and the context of evidence they use. When debaters have little idea as to the ethical standards and/or intellectual abilities of original researchers, they are unable to make such assurances. I am disturbed that unrestricted evidence trading may threaten the integrity of the activity itself. AFA ethical codes and NDT evidence standards represent attempts to deal with the symptoms of the problem, but the unwillingness of most judges to impose sanctions makes me less than sanguine about the success of the attempt.

For me personally, the aforementioned innovations of the '70's have been more cosmetic than real. I do not coach very differently because of them, and I do not perceive debaters debating differently (except for those perhaps temporary differences engendered by CEDA) because of them. However, I do think there have been more subtle, yet more important changes in the theoretical base for the activity. I have found myself abandoning the safety of stock issues to embrace "policy-making" at mid-decade and now "hypothesis-testing" at the end of the decade. As a judge I do not feel threatened by the notion of debaters making theoretical arguments in order to influence my choice of decision-rules. My personal changes are not unique. While there are few who espouse hypothesis-testing, there are many who have followed the Sedalia Conference's recommendation that "questions of forensic theory and strategy . . . should be resolved by the process of argumentation."[5] In 1974 only 5 judges at the NDT indicated that they considered debate theory subject to argument in the debate itself; in 1980 the number had increased to 52.[6] Any trend that parallels my personal development must be a healthy one!

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[5] James H. McBath (ed.), *Forensics as Communication* (Skokie: National Textbook Company, 1975), p. 29.

[6] Jack Rhodes (ed.), *Booklet of Judges* (National Debate Tournament Committee, 1974); Janet S. Trapp (ed.), *Judging Philosophy Booklet* (National Debate Tournament Committee, 1980).

It was my zeal for competition, as much as anything else, that brought me into college coaching at the beginning of the decade and the loss of much of that zeal which encouraged me to leave at mid-decade. It is recognition of the essentially cooperative nature of the activity which enables me to remain comitted to active coaching at the end of the decade. I suspect that many other coaches share my initial motivation and also find it rather ephemeral. It takes no more than a quick glance at the list of the DSR-TKA chapter sponsors in 1970 for one to discover that most of them are no longer active coaches. The turnover is so great that I find myself, after only ten years, one of the "old buffaloes" of the activity. The physical and mental wear and tear of a season that runs from mid-July through April certainly may be a contributing factor, and I applaud the NDT Committee's decision to hold future NDT's in March as a step toward reducing the problem. However, I suspect that it is lessening of competitive zeal that is more responsible for the attrition rate, and I see little in the events of the '70's which can reduce that problem.

Student participants in forensics during the '70's were, like everything else, ever-changing and ever-the-same. Sometimes there seem to be too few of them to justify budgeting expenditures; at other times there seem to be too many for understaffed and underbudgeted programs. In 1970 and in 1979 debaters seem more concerned with winning than with finding truth, though they still fret over the injustice of "bad decisions" and misuse of evidence (their opponents', of course). Still, I suspect that the students of 1979 may be quite different in some undiscernable way from those of 1970. I know that I have changed and so has the perspective I bring to bear in dealing with the people for whom intercollegiate forensics exists.

It is the alteration in my own perspective that leaves suspect the changes I think I have observed in the preceding pages. I know that I have found substitutes for the long since shed stock issues and zeal for competition, but how else am I different as a debate coach? If I cannot be certain about the changes in me, how can I be certain about the changes in intercollegiate forensics during the '70's? As I wrote at the outset, it would be presumptuous of me to try.

FORENSICS IN THE SEVENTIES: IN RETROSPECT

DAVID ZAREFSKY

I am grateful for the invitation to reflect on the progress of forensics during the last decade. When one is caught up in day-to-day activity, it often is hard to find signs of movement or change. And, to be sure, indicators of constancy are numerous. In 1970 as in 1980, debaters were criticized for talking too fast. Affirmative cases included narrow if not exotic interpretations of the topic. Intensive research was required for success on the "national circuit." The institutions which exalted national competition, and those which shunned it, were about the same as now. The National Debate Tournament, then only four years removed from West Point, still was regarded as the climax of the forensic season.

One could go on in listing the seeming continuities, but they mask fairly drastic changes over the past decade. In this essay four major changes will be addressed: alterations in the meaning and scope of the term "forensics" itself, modifications in debate theory and practice, shifts stimulated by the National Developmental Conference, and changing economic and demographic trends. These topics hardly exhaust the course of forensics during the seventies, but they do provide vantage points from which to view the decade.

The Changing Meaning of "Forensics"

One major change of the 1970's is in the very notion of what "forensics" refers to. Ten years ago the term could be taken as synonymous with competitive debate conducted with a standard format, "10-5" time limits, focusing exclusively on policy issues, and aspiring to the championship of the National Debate Tournament as the pinnacle of success. Except for the virtually total conversion of the national circuit to a cross-examination format (based, in my view, on a misreading of the recommendations of the National Developmental Conference), these descriptions still reflect the predominant views. But there have been both small and dramatic shifts that portend much greater variety and diversity for forensics in the future.

Clearly the most dramatic of these changes has been the burgeoning interest in individual events, which have steadily increased both in number of student participants and in the range of competitive opportunities. The growth in individual events spurred the formation of the National Forensic Association and encouraged the American Forensic Association to initiate a National Individual Events Tournament. Both of these events have proven to be popular and should become more so with the passage of time.

Even within the debate activity, there has been considerable variation in formats. Especially notable is the rapid growth of the Cross-Examination Debate Association, which has tried to select resolutions focusing on issues of value and to emphasize in-round analysis rather than pre-round re-

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search. At the high-school level, the widespread development within the last few years of the two-person Lincoln-Douglas Debate format represents an attempt at much the same sort of emphasis. This format may well "filter up" to the intercollegiate level within the next several years. Other innovations include the Protagoras tournament of the early 1970's, the start of a Big Ten tournament with a stress on audience debates (which may help to revive an interest in debate among some of the erstwhile "power schools" of that conference) and the 1980 experiment at the Northwestern University tournament featuring judge-debater interaction periods during the course of a round.

To me, the only sad feature of these innovations in format is that they often are undertaken with an excess of evangelical spirit and missionary zeal. It is not necessary to decry the National Debate Tournament in order to propose an alternative format; nor is it essential to condemn debate in order to defend individual events. No good and much harm comes from the inevitable fragmentation of interests and loyalties which results when new formats are introduced with an air of righteous indignation. Curiosity, imaginativeness, and intellectual pleasure can make for justifications at least as good.

The shift in referent of "forensics," though, has not just been the result of new activity and contest formats. Far more important has been the growing recognition that forensics is not just a collection of contest activities. throughout the 1970's, an increasing number of voices have maintained that the essence of the field is its research and scholarship which should further our understanding of communication from the argumentation perspective. Without overstating the extent of this scholarly renaissance, several signs can be identified. Ten years ago, most manuscripts submitted to the *Journal of the American Forensic Association* dealt with contest activities; today, most concern argumentation theory and criticism. The annual convention programs of the American Forensic Association and Speech Communication Association have given increasing stress to research (and, in the last few years, often have been cosponsored by other interest groups, thereby breaking down some of the insularity for which we have been criticized). Scholarly writings in forensics have been cited more often by others, particularly by theorists investigating the ties between rhetoric and epistemology. The 1979 Summer Conference on Argumentation, sponsored jointly by SCA and AFA, was so successful in bringing together a diverse group of scholars with interests in argumentation that another such event already is being planned for 1981. The pages of this journal have continued to be devoted in large part to the criticism of contemporary public argument. Although media sometimes have been overly concerned with the question of "who won" political debates, they have drawn heavily on the expertise of scholars in forensics to evaluate these events.

Like any scholarly field, forensics ultimately must stand or fall on the results of its research and scholarship as well as the quality of its teaching. For this reason, the developments noted above should be strongly encouraged, and more effort in the same direction is devoutly to be wished for the 1980's.

Modifications in Theory and Practice

Debate theory is far more sophisticated now than was true at the beginning of the decade. Ten years ago, theory was largely a set of conventions

or rules, taken as given and not subject to argument. Now, the notion that theory is to be argued in a round is accepted virtually as a commonplace. The result has been to focus attention on the reasons underlying conventional debate practices. More careful thought has been given, for instance, to why presumption is placed wherever it is, to the proof requirements for a counterplan, or to what constitutes a new argument in rebuttal. On the whole, this change has been beneficial; it has given debaters and judges a clearer understanding of their activity. Nevertheless, there have been costs. First, time spent in arguing about theory is time not available for discussion of the substance of the topic. Second, focusing on theory arguments can encourage game-playing strategies in which theory becomes not the means to facilitate intelligent discussion of the debate topic but the means to score cheap victories through procedural arguments. And, third, the new convention that "theory is arguable" may encourage a vicious relativism in judging behavior, with the result that judges not only employ contradictory criteria from one round to the next but feel compelled to waive the use of common sense lest they unduly "interject" themselves into the round. These risks are real, and need to be confronted. But they do not deny the great gain in understanding of theory and its relation to practice.

One specific respect in which debate theory is richer now than in 1970 is the development of paradigmatic perspectives on the debate process. We've thought much more consciously about questions such as "What are we really doing when we debate?" or "On what sort of human behavior is the debate process modeled?" Hardly anyone thought much about these questions in 1970, so great was the hold of the traditional "stock issues" model over people's view of the activity. The strongest challenge to this model has been the articulation of a view of debate as a comparison between policy systems, a paradigm which first came to be argued in rounds in the early 1970's, became codified in the literature by mid-decade, and now is fairly close to being the new conventional wisdom. An alternative paradigm, in which I have been involved, models debate on the hypothesis-testing activity of the philosopher or scientist. Elements of this paradigm were argued in the early to middle 1970's and it is now finding its way into the literature. Other paradigms have been discussed as well, and there seems particularly to be new interest in a view of debate as a special kind of "language game" which is constituted by its own rules.

Other changes in debate theory have been the result less of conscious thought than of the accidental effects of practice. Inherency receives less attention than it used to, partly because the boundaries between status quo and resolution have not always seemed clear, partly because inherency mistakenly has been thought to focus on the fairly irrelevant question of why the present system is unable to adopt the affirmative plan. Counterplans receive far more attention than they used to, largely as an offset to affirmative cases which offered narrow interpretations of the topic but were difficult to assail on their own grounds. Such notions as additive advantages in second affirmative constructive, "turnarounds" in which a plan objection becomes an additional reason to support the resolution, and strategic concessions of arguments in rebuttal, all are creations of the 1970's. So, too, is the analogy of the affirmative plan to a piece of legislation, with the result that far more time is spent in the presentation of the plan, mentioning technical details of administration as well as general principles.

The Impact of the Sedalia Conference

No account of forensics in the 1970's would be complete without mention of the National Developmental Conference held in 1974 at Sedalia, Colorado. I thought then, and do now, that the Sedalia Conference was one of my most invigorating professional experiences. Thirty people representing quite diverse constituencies in forensics deliberated about the future of the field and attempted to chart that future in a set of over sixty comprehensive recommendations ranging from the curriculum of argumentation courses to professional preparation expected of forensics directors. In retrospect the Sedalia Conference has been criticized—for being overly general in its recommendations, for focusing more on the ideal than the practical, for de-emphasizing individual events. But these complaints miss the fundamental significance of Sedalia—that it was possible to discern a set of principles on which forensics educators could unite to plan for the future.

Where criticism *is* warranted, I think, is in the forensic community's failure to respond to the Sedalia Conference proposals. Those which have been widely adopted are probably the least consequential. We do now have "parameters" accompanying the national debate resolution, without any appreciable change in the practice of narrow interpretations of a topic. We have gone from the virtual absence of cross-examination to the use of that format in virtually every tournament (thereby ignoring the conferees' call for a *variety* of formats). There is, perhaps, greater sensitivity to the procedures by which judges are assigned to contest rounds. But I find little evidence that we've progressed much in curriculum or pedagogy, that we've developed the links between forensics and the variety of academic disciplines which the conference discussed, that our research contributes significantly more to the development of theories of argument, or that we've made great inroads in strengthening graduate programs to train forensics teachers and coaches. With respect to these larger issues, what seems to have failed is not the vision of the Sedalia Conference but the will to carry it through.

Economic and Demographic Trends

Particularly in the latter part of the decade, forensics came under the sway of nationwide trends which promise to alter traditional activity patterns. The combination of drastically higher fuel prices and persistent double-digit inflation have eroded the purchasing power of most budgets; few institutions have managed to stay even. As a consequence, an alarming number of schools have either cancelled or curtailed their programs. National-circuit tournaments are smaller than they used to be, and the decline would be even greater were it not for the fact that some schools have added *depth* to their programs, regularly entering four or five teams in a tournament rather than two. The number of tournaments also has declined, even after allowance is made for the rapid growth in individual events and off-topic tournaments.

It is hard to know whether the number of students involved in forensics has risen or fallen. Some programs have shrunk or withered; others have been born and now thrive. It appears that an increasing number of women participate, but this impression may be more the result of heightened consciousness than any real change. Minority participation remains virtually nil.

Within the past decade the intensity of high-school participation has increased; there now is an easily recognizable national high-school circuit. This trend, however, has been threatened by declining enrollments and taxpayer revolt. It sometimes has seemed hard to defend forensics (or speech communication generally) against the charge that it is a frill which can be dispensed with when times are tight. During the seventies, these threats did not prove damaging, largely because enrollment declines were just beginning to affect the high school level and had not yet reached colleges and universities. But they were portents of things to come, and signs of the need for careful and creative planning on the part of forensics educators. For most of the seventies, such long-range planning was no more in evidence than were the palpable signs of crisis.

Conclusion

While many things about forensics stayed the same, some significant things did not. The activity is different from what it was ten years ago, weaker in some respects and stronger in others. Some of the changes are passing fads; other signify long-term adjustments in structure and function. Now once again, forensics faces a new set of challenges, and how we respond to them will influence the shape of our activity in the decade to come.